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A WORKING WOMAN'S LIFE

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Very Sincerely Yours
Marianne Farningham

A WORKING WOMAN'S LIFE

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

BY

MARIANNE FARNINGHAM

AUTHOR OF "GIRLHOOD," "HARVEST GLEANINGS,"
"WOMEN AND THEIR WORK," ETC.

"Forget not all His benefits"

SECOND IMPRESSION

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FOREWORD

I HAVE had frequent misgivings while writing this autobiography, for I know of no particular reason why it should have been written; and it has appeared very egotistic to do it. But many friends have expressed a wish that I should myself write the story of my life, and in some respects it has been a pleasant task. I have found it an interesting life to live, but I do not know whether it will be interesting to read. My hope is that it may be useful, especially to girls and women who are timid as to the years before them and the duties they have to face. We change our mottoes as we proceed through life. Mine is now, "Let not your heart be troubled"; but through all my working years my favourite was, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." My story is one of God's goodness and mercy; if it may inspire hope and trust in some who are beginning their lives, to God be all the glory.

M. F.

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A WORKING WOMAN'S LIFE

CHAPTER I

A CHILD OF THE COUNTRY

I BEGIN the story of my life on a March day in the first year of the new century. The air is full of retrospect. The passing of the nineteenth century, and the death of the great and beloved Queen, have forced back the thoughts of the people, and for a little while, before the flood of the new times carries us onward, we all halt for a moment or two and think of the past. I have a past to think of, too, and though there is nothing very remarkable to make it worth the telling, every life is interesting, and perhaps I may have a few friends in different parts of the country who will care to read the simple story of a worker's life. So, while the birds are singing the old love song in a new spring, the primroses are opening their eyes in the woods, and the trees are covered with buds pushing their way to the light, I will try to forget how far I am on into the autumn, and go back to the sweet fair days of my spring.

I had the good fortune to be born in the country. Farningham is a winsome little village on the banks of the Darent, in the midst of the garden of Kent, and

halfway between London and the county town. It was on December 17, 1834, that I came into the world, the first child of my parents, who were married on the previous Christmas Day. My father, Joseph Hearn, was a small tradesman, and my mother, whose maiden name was Rebecca Bowers, was the daughter of a working paper-maker, who was also a preacher of great force and originality. My earliest recollections are of a wonder why, whenever he preached, the chapel seemed always full, and why people both laughed and cried during his discourse. I can recall my grandfather, Mr. George Bowers, of Eynsford, as I saw him on several occasions. In the pulpit I always thought he looked a very fine man. Seated in our kitchen, talking with some old friend, each smoking a long clay pipe, and with a glass of home-brewed beer on the table, as was customary then, I was a little afraid of the keen eyes that watched me. He and his friends spoke on high themes, of Calvinistic doctrine and the heresies of Arminianism, and sometimes they lapsed into village gossip. I always tried to understand, and was always bewildered. I remember him, too, as the host of his family on Christmas Day. He had a large number of sons and daughters—I think about a dozen—and most of them had large families too, but we all kept Christmas together in the old house "down the lane" until we were quite too many even for that hospitable table. His wife, my grandmother Bowers, was a sweet, placid old lady, and some of the proudest moments of my life were when she took my arm as we walked to chapel together. She must have been very short, for I was not then full-grown—indeed, I never

have been—and she died when I was about eight. My grandfather lived to be a very old man, and as long as he was able he walked many miles to the different villages to preach. He kept his keen wit and spirituality to the end. A friend once told me that he said to him, "Creasy, I shall die in debt." "How is that?" asked Mr. Creasy. "Why, I can never pay the thanks I owe, for gratitude can't keep pace with mercies," he replied.

My father's mother lived with us, a dear old lady, who thought beautiful thoughts, and expressed them in beautiful language. She wrote poetry, and her prayers always seemed to take me into heaven. It was she who taught me to read, and, strange as it seems now, I was thought to be rather a prodigy because when I was six years old I could read any chapter in the Bible. The Bible, indeed, was my only lesson-book then and for years after. How I loved it! In it I found an inheritance of wealth which has made me rich all my life. My grandmother also taught me a prayer, written by Isaac Watts, in monosyllables—

"May I live to know and fear Thee,
Trust and love Thee all my days,
Then go dwell for ever near Thee,
See Thy face, and sing Thy praise."

The last I remember of my grandmother Hearn was one night during a terrible thunderstorm. I think there have never been such thunderstorms as those we had at Farningham. She was ill and in bed, and we were all in her room. I recall how peaceful she was through the storm, and that it quieted my fear to hold her hand.

She was very deaf. There was an awful clap of thunder that seemed as if it would bring the house down. She opened her eyes with a smile, and asked, "Was that thunder?" And then she repeated a verse which we do not often hear now—

> "This awful God is ours,
> Our Father and our Friend,
> He will send down His heavenly powers,
> To keep us to the end."

My father and mother were both members of the Baptist church at Eynsford, a pretty village about a mile from Farningham. They were both Sunday school teachers; indeed, the life of the chapel was their life, and it became mine. I have been told that when I was a month old, and my mother was able for the first time to go to chapel, she took the baby too. It was customary to have tea in the vestry. After tea the friends went into the chapel, and I was laid, happily asleep, on the table in what was known as the "singing pew," in which at the ordinary services the choir sat. As those who formed the tea-party were interested in the new baby which had come to Joseph and Rebecca, they held a prayer-meeting for the child. I have always had the feeling that no baptismal service in any church, though performed by a priest, assisted by godfathers and godmothers, could have been a more real consecration than that simple prayer-meeting in the village chapel. I was a "child of many prayers," and delight to think friends prayed for me when for the first time I entered a chapel.

The influence of this little dissenting church and its associations, not only on my own early life, but on that

MY PURITAN GRANDMOTHER, ANN HEARN.

of our neighbours, was very great. Eynsford, through its agency, touched many other villages. It was a "Particular Baptist Church," founded in 1775, and consisted at its formation of five members, who were baptized in the Darent on a profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus. Its first meeting-house was a stable fitted up for the purpose. Much opposition and persecution attended its inception, but the little cause grew and flourished in spite of that. In 1802 a young Baptist minister became its pastor, whose name, John Rogers, will be revered through all generations, for he was one of the most distinguished of the Nonconformist ministers of the time, a man of remarkable ability, of noble character and great power and influence, richly endowed by the Spirit of God. Two years later a new chapel was erected, which for a hundred years was the home of devotion and love. The wife of Mr. Rogers was the sister of my Grandmother Hearn; they were both strong, sweet women, of considerable culture and striking mental powers, both women of unflinching principles and strong convictions. I have said that my grandmother was deaf, but she always attended the services, and Mr. Rogers said she was his great helper, for while he preached she prayed, "Save Thy people. Bless Thine inheritance." The church was absolutely Calvinistic, as well as Particular Baptist. Other churches were judged to be in error; but Mrs. Rogers wanted to tell the people that every one who would might be saved. It is curious to-day to remember what fierce fights were once fought under the two banners of Calvinism and Free Will. I am ashamed to say that the only recollection I have

personally of Mr. Rogers is that of his giving me some plums, pushed through his garden gate one at a time.

I love to think of my child-life in those two villages, Farningham and Eynsford. My father, who never had a yard of land of his own, had a passion for building, and in our little garden he erected two outhouses. One was a workshop, and the other was for domestic purposes—a place in which the washing could be done, and with a loft above for storage. This loft was a place of mystery to me. There were several hives of bees, and there were openings through the walls for their convenience, and my father took as much pains with their homes as with his own. He made models of various places of interest. Among the rest was Windsor Castle, a duplicate of which he made and sent to the Prince Consort, who returned him an autograph letter of thanks. My father was very fond of his bees, and he and they were good friends. I remember once he took me up with him to perform a curious little ceremony. He had lost a cousin, and he told me he was going to inform the bees, and they would say they were sorry. He tapped the hive, and then said in a low, quiet voice, "My cousin is dead," and I felt a cold shiver pass over me, as I distinctly heard a wailing response like a buzzing moan from the bees. There was also in the loft a telescope, through which I often looked into the heart of a beautiful wood that was a mile or two away. My father intended to use the lower part of this building as a small private brewery, and he had just secured all the necessary utensils for brewing his own beer, when some

great temperance orator, perhaps Father Mathew, came to the village. My father was convinced, and became one of the first total abstainers. The next day he told me about it, and, showing me the pledge which he had signed, asked me if I would like my name to go down with his. I could not write, so he guided my hand, and together we wrote my name. It was rather hard in those days to be a teetotaller, and at the parties to which I was invited I had to endure much. My father had just been made a deacon, and a lady told him that if she had known he was going to be an abstainer she would not have voted for him, as his conduct was most unscriptural!

In course of time other children came to keep me company, until there were five of us, three girls and two boys. We went to Sunday school as soon as we were able to walk the distance, the girls always being dressed exactly alike. There was no day school to which we could go. A young ladies' boarding establishment existed, to which, quite early in my life, I turned longing eyes, but the charges were too high for my father's means. There was also the National school connected with the Church of England, but we were never allowed to go there. It was then, as now, a Nonconformist principle not to allow Chapel children to learn the Church Catechism, and whatever might have been my father's opinion, his fellow-members considered it a far greater sin to send children to the National school than to let them remain uneducated. At Eynsford there was a small dame school, to which I went for a little while, but for the most part all our early

lessons came from our parents, chiefly, of course, our mother. She taught us to sweep and clean, sew and knit, to mend and make, and to be careful in the exercise of all household arts. "Think of what you are doing," was a frequent hint given to me, because, when I was darning stockings, or sewing seams, or even dusting a room, my thoughts were generally "over the hills and far away," for I began to dream as soon as I began to think. It was a beautiful world of fancy in which I lived, and I saw lovely sights, and did heroic deeds; and my everyday life was beautiful too, for it was filled with love, the joy of doing, and much running about in the open air.

I had the one great illness of my life when I was very young indeed. I can just remember the hours of delirium and suffering. It was small-pox with complications. Once I seemed to come out of the confusion of my brain, and saw mother wringing her hands with tears running down her cheeks, and I heard her say, "My poor little dying child; O Lord, take care of her." I do not remember refusing to let our minister pray with me, but my mother afterwards told me that I did, to her very great grief and anxiety, for it filled her with fear in regard to my spiritual state. She was not quite comforted until months after, when the prizes were given in the Sunday school, and I chose for mine a volume of "Sermons to Children," though I have not the remotest idea why. It was a long and weary period of convalescence through which I passed, and I lay in utter weakness and prostration day after day. My bed was an old-fashioned four-poster, with white hangings

and curtains. They were trimmed with tassels, and these tassels were a constant source of interest to me. I called them men and women, or children walking in procession, sometimes to a school-treat, but oftener to a funeral, and I used to wonder if it were my own. The next thing I remember was a terrible hunger that would not be appeased. I have seldom felt myself so badly treated since as in those days when roast apples took so long to roast, and my mother turned deaf ears to my entreaties for cake, and ruthlessly cut away all the fat from my specially cooked mutton-chop. But I remember how sweetly and tenderly she seemed to love me in those days, and how there was a strange difference in the way in which she talked to me. We had a beautiful old family Bible with pictures, and this was always brought out on Sunday evenings, and we used to sit and stand around our mother while she told us stories. It seemed that every Sunday evening, before bedtime, we went to Bethlehem. Every little touch and incident was so dwelt upon that the Holy Birth became part of our life. All the words of Jesus grew so familiar to us that we were never able to forget them after. We were taught to repeat them reverently long before we could understand them, and they have never seemed more beautiful than in those first days. But we had our Old Testament favourites too; Baby Moses was always "a dear little thing," and Joseph in the pit, and Daniel in the lions' den, were tragedies which, when we were away by ourselves, we often acted. The Bible was in our home the children's library. We were never told fairy-tales, but our mother used often to recite to us Jane

Taylor's "Moral Songs," and we had our share of old nursery rhymes, and dearly loved "Old Mother Hubbard" and "Little Red Riding-Hood," though I am not quite sure that they held their own with Jonah and the whale.

My first attempt at rhyming was an epitaph on a dead toad which we found in the garden, and which we put in a match-box and buried with great solemnity. I could not write the epitaph, for in the matter of writing I was quite behind the other children of my age. My ignorance in this respect was a sore trouble to me, and I made the lives of my parents a burden to them with my continual cry, "Teach me to write." At length a very pleasant plan was thought of. The next house but one to ours was the home of the Rev. John Rogers; his youngest daughter, Isabella, hearing of my childish desire, kindly undertook to teach me to write. My father took great pains with a little box in the shape of a book, which he made to hold my copy-book, pen, ink, ruler, and pencil, and which I proudly carried under my arm when I went to receive my writing-lesson.

Two incidents illustrate the awakening of the soul of a child. Seated on a footstool, I was one morning rocking my brother in his cradle, with a bound volume of *The Sailors' Magazine* in my lap. Some of our ancestors were seafaring folk, and I have an indistinct idea that one of them was the Captain Gibbon, who first brought mahogany into England. I think it was my Grandmother Hearn who gave me the magazine to read while I rocked baby. Turning over the leaves, I found two poems, which had a marvellous effect upon me

One was about a family Bible, and the last line of each stanza was—

"The old-fashioned Bible that lay on the stand."

The other was the hand of an angel that led me into a wonderful world of vivid imagination and unutterable joy. It was "The Better Land," by Felicia Hemans. I wish I could describe, even if only so far as I am able to live it again, the strange, sweet emotions which overcame me as I read those lines. I remember that having read through the poem, I was obliged, to prevent myself from being overcome by faintness, to put down the book and go to the door for a breath of fresh air, though the baby had not gone to sleep and soon summoned me back to duty by loud cries. How the music and the rhythm charmed me! Quite what I saw I cannot remember, as I repeated softly to myself—

"Is it far away in some region old,
Where rivers wander o'er sands of gold,
Where the burning rays of the ruby shine,
And the diamond lights up the secret mine,
And the pearl gleams forth from the coral strand:
Is it there, sweet mother, this better land?"

It was at this time that Nature claimed me and drew me to her very heart. At the bottom of our garden, and past the two buildings, was a wall, just low enough for me to look over, and also to get over on many happy holidays. I must have spent hours, as a child, leaning against that wall and looking out into the world of summer. First there was a meadow, and a gate out of it led into another meadow, in which was a row of magnificent lime-trees, which I loved and almost worshipped—

even now the scent of the limes can make me feel a child again. At the end of this meadow was the river Darent, which made music day and night; in it watercress grew, and such forget-me-nots as are not to be found in the world beside, and over it the willows bent, and God's skies of blessing stretched. Then far away in the blue distances were gentle hills, and shady woods, and picturesque little villages. This view from our garden wall was never the same two days together. I could always find surprise of loveliness hidden away in some corner of it. It was ever beautiful, spring, summer, autumn, or winter. The summer sunsets were heavenly; indeed, it often seemed to me that heaven itself was just over there as far as my eye could reach, and I have many a time imagined groups of angels and the "innumerable company" moving about in the masses of white and golden clouds. Often I have stood with tears in my eyes, and my heart throbbing with love and gladness, and tried to say something to God to let Him know what I was feeling. I wonder if He took the child's silent ecstasy for praise!

I was never allowed to stay long enough to satisfy me, for the cheery voice of my mother would call me into the house to amuse my brothers and sisters, or do some work. I am afraid she was grieved at my evident love of standing still and gazing. On one or two occasions, to my utter shame, she broke in upon me when I was talking to myself, and ordered me to sweep the carpet all over again, or showed me some article of furniture which I ought to have dusted. Dear mother! she did not like my always having a book in

my hand or pocket, and would have been better pleased if I had been equally fond of the brush or the needle; but she did her best to keep me at work all day, only letting me have books and magazines when my tasks were done. She took care, however, to give us all a very good time. She loved to see us play and to play with us. She was so proud to see us looking pretty and clean that we were always sorry when we had spoiled her handiwork, though I am afraid my repentance had not much practical effect, for I was a rollicking, mischievous child, often getting into trouble. Once, in trying to get through a hedge, I tore a pinafore that was nearly new. A poor, sobered, remorseful child I was as I went home, with the thought of my mother before me. It happened, however, that she was out, and so I put myself to bed that night. Kneeling beside the bed, and repeating my prayers, the thought of God suddenly came to me. In a flash I remembered what I had been told about Him, that He was good and great and could do everything, that He loved good children, and even forgave naughty ones; and the thought occurred to me that I had only to pray and He would mend my pinafore for me. So I asked Him to do it, saying over and over again, "O Lord, have mercy upon me, and mend my pinafore for me, for Jesus Christ's sake, Amen." Then I got into bed and waited, closing my eyes in awe and expectation. Several times I got out to pray again and examine the hole, and at first it seemed to me that it was really getting smaller, but after a time the disappointing conviction was forced upon me that the hole remained exactly the same; and I lay in my bed softly

sobbing for the unanswered prayer—not knowing how many thousands had done so before me. I had several aunts whom I loved, sisters of my mother, but the dearest was Aunt Mary. She came into the room, and, stooping to kiss me, discovered that I was awake and crying. I was comforted and quieted in her kind arms, and soon told her the whole story—how anxious I was that mother should not know that I had torn my pinafore, and how disappointed I was in God. Said my aunt, "I will mend it for you. Perhaps that is God's way of answering you. Perhaps He sent me here to-night on purpose. Now try to trust in Him and go to sleep." I did; and never a word did I hear from my mother about that torn pinafore. I have many times since imagined the smiles of the little family group downstairs, but I think it was very sweet of them not to laugh away my faith.

CHAPTER II

CHILDHOOD

MY first real sorrow was the death of my little brother, the eldest son, but that memory is so faint that I think my parents must have deliberately resolved not to let it overshadow us more than was necessary. I remember seeing my father walk about with him in his arms, and that we were told afterwards how the Good Shepherd had taken our little brother Alfred to be with Him. Also I remember that we were all put into black frocks and white diaper pinafores, and that we wore white socks and patent strap-shoes. On the night of the funeral I could not sleep, and I lay listening to the nightingales. Our house was nearly opposite the vicarage garden, or at least it was near enough for the sounds to come to me through the stillness of the night. The birds thrilled and comforted me strangely. At first I was half frightened, thinking the singers must be something more than birds, the sounds were so loud as well as sweet; but afterwards I remembered what I had heard about nightingales, and was sure the songs were theirs. The nightingales in the vicarage garden were delightful realities to me in all the summers of my childhood's life, for there were many nights when I was sweetly

disturbed by their singing, and I linked them with heaven.

I must have been between nine and ten when there was a grand achievement by the Nonconformists of our villages, and I had my heart's desire, and went to school! Joseph Lancaster and his schools were so talked about that even Farningham and Eynsford heard of them. The necessity of educating the children was felt more and more, and two or three men had consciences that would not let them rest because of the wrongs and losses of the little ones of the chapels; and therefore, under the auspices of the British and Foreign School Society, a building was erected at Eynsford. On the day of the opening of the school my mother took me and my next sister, Rebecca, and we were among the first scholars enrolled. It was a great event, an almost unprecedented thing for our mother to be out in the morning with her children. My youngest sister, Hephzibah, was also with us, but the authorities decided that Heppie was too young to be admitted, much to that little person's wrath and disappointment.

All the Farningham scholars took their dinners to school, and we had glorious times in that dinner-hour. The river ran at the bottom of a short meadow near the playground, and was a source of endless interest to us. Curious scenes were enacted on the bank, and many dangerous games were played. One of the willows was bent over the water, stretching half across the stream, and of course that was our favourite tree. I often conducted a baptismal service there! As my friends were Baptists, it goes without saying that it was a baptism

by immersion. We dressed up all sorts of things in the school towels. I stood upon the extreme edge of the trunk, and the boys on the bank, who represented the deacons, passed the candidates on to me, and with more or less difficulty I dipped them, while the other children on the bank sang Hallelujah. The ceremony was the most easily accomplished when the river was full, for it was impossible to maintain a ministerial dignity when stooping low, or lying flat on the trunk, in order to reach the water. We were found out all too soon, for we had an accident which probably prevented a much greater catastrophe. My sister took off her pinafore to wrap round "the candidate," which was that day the school bucket, and they floated away together. We all tried with sticks and umbrellas to get it out, but did not succeed in reaching it. The loss of two such valuable things as the pinafore and the bucket naturally occasioned considerable questioning, and the truth came out. Punishment was meted to the offenders in what we considered quite undue and undeserved measure. There was also an abiding penalty, for we were forbidden ever to go into that meadow again during the dinner-hour. I was plenteously punished at school for my general naughtiness, and at home for my lack of reverence for the solemn subject of baptism. I was the most sorry because my governess, whom I loved, called me a ringleader. Indeed, I must have been a very naughty little girl, for I remember one teacher telling me, in the Sunday school, that, but for the facts of my being a child of many prayers, and that nothing was too hard for the Lord, she would think there could be

no salvation for me, and that I was certain to be sent to hell! I was extremely shocked, and was glad when, soon after, the superintendent put me into another class. I loved both the day and the Sunday school, being passionately eager to learn, and I really wanted to be good, though I think no one understood this but my mother. I used to be examined at home in regard to what I learned at the British school, and my father often said, "I do not think you are learning anything whatever there, only they are managing to make you more intelligent," which was perhaps the best way of educating me. The knowledge received at the Sunday school was, however, very definite and dogmatic. It was a happy thing, for which I have been thankful all my life, that I was made to learn by heart long passages of Scripture. Let no one think that this was ever a hardship. The grand themes, and the stately, beautiful language in which they were told, fed my very life. I think the first I learned was the twenty-third psalm, and there has never been any time when every sentence has not appealed to me. The fifty-first also was a great favourite—it expressed so much of what I felt. The Gospel of St. John I learned from beginning to end, and the heart and mind of the child never saw the slightest difficulty in it. Many chapters in the other Gospels were also committed to memory, and some from the Epistles. Naturally I did not understand them, nor even try to, but I knew that they dealt with high things, and delighted in the words. As to the hymns which I learned, and repeated to my teachers, I am amazed that books containing them were ever put into the hands

of children. Of course, like everybody in the school, I learned—

> "There is a dreadful hell,
> And everlasting pains,
> Where sinners must with devils dwell
> In darkness, fire, and chains."

We sang the words glibly enough and without much thought of what they meant, but I am none the less sure that the theology of the day, and particularly of those hymns, had considerable influence on the minds of the young singers. Hell was a very real thing to me, and I had a curious fancy, when a very young child, that it was underground, and that there was one entrance to it from a certain place just outside Farningham, which was called Whitepost Hill. Many a time when I have been walking up that road alone, with a weight of many sins upon my conscience, I have been afraid there would be an earthquake, which would swallow me up; and I have run over it in breathless haste and with panting prayers. Once, in a very dry season, there was a slight fissure in the road, and until the merciful rain came and healed it I often slipped away from my home to see if it had grown wider, for I quite expected to meet my doom there.

Much of the religious teaching of the day was far more sombre than it should have been, and I rejoice to think that only the happier side of Christian life and theology is presented to the children of to-day. The following hymn is one which I learned when very young, and it was one of my chief favourites too, though now I should blame any teacher who allowed

a merry child to learn by heart such sentiments in regard to "the life that is." We sang what was not true, for the land was not barren, neither was it a vale of tears.

"Young as I am, with pilgrim feet,
Father, I travel to Thy seat;
And, leaning on my Saviour's hand,
Prepare to leave this barren land.

"My cradle was beset with fears,
My infant eyes o'erflowed with tears,
Ere I could good or evil know,
My little heart was filled with woe.

"While o'er this desert world I roam,
Teach me to seek a better home;
Unstained by woe, unchanged by years,
Unlike this gloomy vale of tears."

This hymn was in the little book published by the Sunday School Union, in a red-leather binding, which many of us well remember. Most of the hymns were bright enough, and a special favourite at that time was "Hosanna," a hymn written for the Sunday School Jubilee. "I think when I read that sweet story of old," and "See Israel's gentle Shepherd stands" were also very dear to us.

There was another hymn sung in our school once a year, on Whit Sunday, the moral tendency of which was no doubt good, but which brought painful blushes to the cheeks of many of the girls. It was the fashion in Kent to put on our new summer clothes for the first time on that day, when the gallery on which the scholars sat suddenly bloomed into a flower-garden. Our Sunday school treat was always held on Whit Monday, so that

altogether it was a gay and festive time. Our good old superintendent, Mr. Whitehead, seeing the pretty array of the girls before him, never failed to give out with great emphasis—two lines at a time, because not many of us had books—these verses—

"Why should our garments, made to hide
Our parents' shame, provoke our pride?
The art of dress did ne'er begin,
Till Eve, our mother, learned to sin.

"When first she put the covering on,
Her robe of innocence was gone!
And yet her children vainly boast
In the sad marks of glory lost.

"How proud we are, how fond to show
Our clothes, and call them rich and new,
When the poor sheep and silk-worm wore
That very clothing long before.

"The tulip and the butterfly
Appear in gayer coats than I;
Let me be dressed fine as I will,
Flies, worms, and flowers exceed me still."

The only time I loved that hymn was one Whit-Sunday when my sister and I had to appear *without our new dresses!*

This superintendent, a farmer and fruit-grower, lived at Swanley, and for forty or fifty years, through all weathers, winter snow and summer heat, he walked three miles every Sunday morning to Eynsford chapel, in time to begin school at nine o'clock. We never knew him to be a minute out; he kept even better time than our clocks. When in doubt, we watched for him to pass our house, and, seeing him, knew it was time for us to run off as fast as we could. He

spent the whole day at the chapel, but so did many others. As soon as we were old enough, this used to be our Sunday programme: Seven o'clock prayer-meeting, nine o'clock Sunday school, half-past ten public worship, two o'clock Sunday school, three o'clock service, half-past five o'clock Sunday school prayer-meeting, six o'clock service. I remember once when we had attended all these and sat down to conclude with family worship, my brother, tired out, pleaded in pitiful voice, "Father, read a *short* psalm." We used to go home to breakfast, but took our dinner with us, and ate it in our own pew, which was just inside, and was comfortably curtained round; but tea we had with the rest in the vestry, and a very happy time the friends spent together. It was like the meeting of a great family, and they came from all the villages around, Kingsdown, Meopham, Ash, Sutton, Darent, Cray, Swanley, Shoreham, Sevenoaks, and perhaps other places. Farmers drove, and brought their families, and others walked. Nobody thought it a hardship to walk five or six miles to chapel. The devoutness, the piety, the Christian friendship and love, all seemed very beautiful to me, and the gladness was like that of the tribes that went up to Jerusalem. The joyousness of these Sundays was wonderful. The chapel was the centre of intense love and loyalty. I remember with what a burst of pure delight the opening hymn used to be sung.

"How did my heart rejoice to hear
My friends devoutly say,
In Zion let us all appear
And keep the holy day."

That little plain chapel, with its whitewashed walls, its table pew, and unadorned gallery, was a veritable temple to the loving hearts of its worshippers. The church at Eynsford was a mother-church. Not only was its pastor, the Rev. John Rogers, a man of considerable intellectual power and great personal influence, but there were other striking preachers, who often took the afternoon service when the minister was otherwise engaged. Those were hard days for Dissent, and I think our people were pretty abundantly persecuted, but it is certain that they rejoiced in that tribulation. I remember hearing that my Grandmother Hearn was baptized in the river, and on her way home was followed by a mob of rough village folk, who seriously injured her by throwing stones and brickbats at her. Still later, when the baptistery was in the chapel, I was told how a wife was baptized whose husband sat in a pew a little way off with a loaded gun, with which he had declared he would shoot her when she came up out of the water. It was spoken of as one of the glorious triumphs of grace that at that service he was changed from a rebel into a repentent seeker of salvation.

Most of the people living at a distance returned to their homes at the close of the afternoon service, but not to be idle, so far as religious duties were concerned. In those days the family was all-important, and the obligations of children and parents received stern and unfailing attention. The children were questioned on Sunday evenings, not only on their lessons in school, but the sermons which they had heard, and every one

was expected to repeat the text. Family prayer was as little likely to be omitted as breakfast or supper, and the sins of the children were visited with unflinching discipline. Parental authority was no dream in those days, but the greatest reality which sons and daughters knew. The father was the master and judge of the household, and straight and strong were the words he addressed to the company of servants and children gathered in the kitchen or the dining-room. "Spare the rod and spoil the child" was a frequently quoted axiom, and the quoter almost always believed that it was from the Bible, and was originally spoken by Solomon.

We got on better than most, because our mother was our minister, and the lessons we had on Sunday evenings were those of love; but our home was conducted on strictly religious principles. Father always prayed for us individually. One special plea for me I remember because it was almost invariably uttered, "Bless dear Polly, and grant that she may find favour with Thee, and with the people with whom she may come in contact." I knew this was asked because I was so much more plain-looking and uninteresting than my brothers and sisters, and that my future prospect was a gloomy one, but I hoped it might prove truly an answered prayer. I record most thankfully that the one great blessing given to me all my life has been the grace and favour of the people among whom I have lived and worked.

The following sketch, written for *The Christian World*, reveals a little bit of our family life:—

"HOP-GARDEN MEMORIES

"When we were children, one of the happiest days of the year was that on which we went 'a-hopping.' We lived on the direct road from London to Maidstone, and before our village was reached hop-gardens began to be seen, while a little below us the best hops were grown, and the largest acreage was given to their cultivation. That was before the time of cheap trips by rail, and the Londoners usually walked the distance, pushing the trucks, or wheeling the barrows which carried the few household goods, including the baby, that were needed for a prolonged stay in the country. A saucepan or kettle, one or two mugs, an old shawl and a couple of blankets were generally packed in the vehicle, which sometimes, instead of being pushed by hand, was drawn by an old horse or donkey. The passage of the 'hoppers' through our village was watched with interest, and there was one Sunday especially which they spent at rest on the route, sleeping in stables, coach-houses, or even doorways, when we had more of them than we liked; but they often travelled in picturesque processions, and made up very merry parties. Our sympathies, however, were not with the strangers from London, but the village folk, who resented their intrusion as likely to keep down the wages and make the hop-gardens uncomfortable with dirt and bad language. The hop-picking season was of great consequence to the villagers. Money then earned was delightful, because it was extra, and provided many comforts which could not otherwise be secured. The year's rent was almost always paid out of 'hopping-money,' which also served to buy the coals for winter, and it was a settled and understood thing that each member of the family should have a new pair of boots or shoes at the end of the hop-picking work; also that if new jackets for the boys and new dresses for the girls were needed the only way to pay for them was to earn money at the 'bin.' So, of course, when we had our day in

the hop-garden, we at once made our way to some old neighbour or hard-working widow, and volunteered our services.

"From the time when we began to be aroused, between three and four o'clock in the morning, by the cheery laughter of the hop-pickers setting out to work, until our day came, we thought and talked of little else. And when, at last, dressed in lilac sun-bonnets and coloured pinafores, and carrying with us our dinner of bread-and-butter and apples to eat, and bottles of milk to drink, we started for the hop-grounds, there were no happier little people than we in all the world, especially if our gentle mother went with us, as she usually did, not only to take care of us but to enjoy the fun too. What a cool, lovely walk it was across the white fields from which the corn had been carried, along the shady Kentish lanes, and over the green meadows! And there is not anything more beautiful than the English hop-gardens. Compared with them, all the vineyards of Europe—excepting, perhaps, those of Italy—are most uninteresting and disappointing. The vines of the Rhine and of Switzerland are only like kitchen gardens of French beans beside our graceful hops. It was a great pleasure to walk along scented avenues of them, with the tall bines interlacing overhead, and with the great three-lobed leaves, and pretty, soft, cone-like catkins making a graceful shade from the sun. Planted three together in a triangle, they had climbed up the twelve-feet-high poles, and were hanging in beautiful gold-green clusters at the top. But we had something more to do than admire the festoons and walk along the trellised way; and so we took side-cuts and followed the sounds of voices until we reached the cleared spaces in which the 'bins' were placed. Does everybody know what a hop-bin is? It is like a large sack, open length-wise at the side, and fastened to a wooden frame. The pickers stand by the side of the bin and drop the hops in. The hop plants are brought and laid over the frame by the 'pole-pullers,' whose duty it is to cut the bine and pull

up the poles and bear them to the workers, who are ready to strip off the pretty clusters with great speed.

"We always received a welcome, and were soon at work ; those who were tall enough stood at the bin, and the others sat on heaps of poles and dropped the hops into baskets or bags, or open, turned-up umbrellas. We worked as fast as we could, each trying to fill his or her receptacle, and putting as few leaves as possible into the basket. The pungent aromatic scent of the hops and the pleasant work in the fresh air acted like a tonic, and talk and laughter and sweet song were heard in all parts of the ground. We did not sing Sankey's hymns, for they had not yet been written, but such old favourites as 'Grace ! 'tis a charming sound,' and 'Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah,' would be raised, and groups of chapel-goers would sing them, the children's voices being the sweetest and heartiest of them all. I can never forget the triumph which once, after missionary meetings had been held in our villages, rang out in the hymn, 'O'er the gloomy hills of darkness, look, my soul, be still and gaze.'

"But 'hopping' is very appetizing work, and it was with wonderful relish that, at twelve o'clock, we forgot the blackness of our hands and the bitter taste on our lips, and ate our thick bread-and-butter. We made our way after dinner to the hedges and the woods, for hopping and nutting and blackberrying all come together, and the time is a right royal one. Some of us went rather far, and tarried a good while, but we always got back for tea, when the kettle was boiled over the wood fire, and the picnic was one never to be forgotten. After tea there was more work, for the measurers would soon come round to put the hops into the bushel-baskets, and then empty them into the big hop-pockets. Those of us who had been idle, or had played truant, were always sorry then, for if the bushels told up well our friends were glad and grateful, because they were paid a shilling for each six or seven bushels that had been picked.

The time was the merriest then, for it was almost certain that one of the little ones would be caught up and tossed into the bin, and covered over with the soft hops, and there were such shriekings of laughter, and scamperings away, that the fun became quite riotous. Our father had probably arrived by that time, and we all went home together, then a happy family of six—father, mother, three girls and one boy—and I could weep because there is only one of us left to-day to tell the story."

It was perhaps when I was about ten that we had measles. Our mother, the gentle nurse of us all, unfortunately caught the infection, and was never strong afterwards. When we had sufficiently recovered to be out in the garden again, I suppose the stage of convalescence found us very weak, and in order to encourage us to stay in the open air, and put forth our little strength, mother bought us all skipping-ropes. We did not know how to use them, so she showed us on a never-to-be-forgotten evening. We stood around, merrily laughing at the sight of our mother skipping like a girl, while we counted the times she kept up. Suddenly she dropped the rope and leaned against the wall, holding her handkerchief to her lips, and I noticed that it was stained with blood.

That was the beginning of the end. The doctor was a frequent visitor at our house for a long time after. Mother was advised to try a specialist, and my first visit to London was on that occasion. We travelled on the coach, for there was no railway. The coach was an interesting institution in our village; it went every day from Maidstone to London and back, and called at Farningham at an inn opposite our house to change

horses. My mother appeared very sad and tired as we came home. I did not know then that she had received her death sentence. She kept about as long as she could, and then took to her bed, on which she lay for many months. Dear, tired mother! she had worked very hard for us all, and it must have been a sore trial to be inactive and suffering in bed while we needed her so much downstairs. A few days ago, while turning over some old papers, I discovered her will. It is dated Farningham, June 30, 1846, and begins thus: "I, Rebecca Hearn, feeling myself growing weaker, and being convinced that I shall never revive, desire in the event of my death that the few following things may be given and received as tokens of affectionate remembrance." Then followed the disposal of her few possessions amongst us all, including her mother and four sisters. The pathetic document thus concludes: "I desire to commend my dear husband and children to the guidance and care of our never-failing Friend. I hope my dear children will be kind and affectionate to each other, dutiful and obedient to their dear father and those who may have the care of them, and as they grow up be industrious and careful, and above all, oh, that they may be led early to seek the Lord Who has said, 'I love them that love Me, and those that seek Me early shall find Me.' I now desire to commit myself into His gracious hands, begging Him to prepare me for whatever He has prepared for me, and to—

"Assure my conscience of her part
In the Redeemer's blood,
And bear Thy witness with my heart
That I am born of God.

"When I to death draw near
Then, Jesus, look to me;
Dispel my every fear,
And bid me come to Thee.

"And, oh, may I like Stephen prove,
The sweet supports of Jesus' love.

"REBECCA HEARN."

My father told me some years afterward that these pleading sentences were quite characteristic of my mother. She was a very humble-minded Christian, who felt her own unworthiness too greatly to have much triumph of faith and assurance of acceptance. She was a lowly follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, and she had much of His spirit in her character and life; she was a tender, loving, reverent, self-forgetful Christian; a wise, devoted, prayerful, watchful mother; a beautiful woman in appearance, graceful in all her actions, whose life was a revelation of consecrated and absolute love.

I used to sit and sew in her bedroom, and read to her from a book called "The Dying Christian," and oftener talk to her, and listen to what she said. She was never a great talker, but I remember that she had a whimsical way of putting even grave and serious things, and that she always seemed to me cheerful and bright whenever I was allowed to be with her. I was a long time being made to believe that she must really die, and I remember my impassioned prayers to God to spare her. She was so much more to us than our father that again and again I sobbed out this beseeching petition, "O Lord, if you must have one, please take our father to heaven, and leave us our dear mother."

Indeed, my life at that time was one long prayer: "Spare my mother. Do not be so cruel to us little children as to take our mother away." At last, in my despair, I cried, "O Lord, let us all die when mother dies, if she must."

It was on Christmas Day that she died, the anniversary of her marriage. That Christmas Eve burnt itself into my soul. To this day I do not know how to bear the sounds of Christmas bells and carol-singers. I stood alone in a dark room, my brother and sisters having been sent to bed, pressing my hot, tear-stained face against the window-pane, and peering out into the darkness at the singers. While they sang "Hark, the herald angels sing," I felt as if all the light of my life went out, and that the Babe of Bethlehem could never be anything more to me again; and when the bells rang out their merry peal I hated them, and shrank from their sounds as if they were blows. I lay awake all night. Toward morning, I heard my aunt advise my father to lie down for a little time, and then, in what seemed an hour later, I heard her open his door, and whisper, "Joseph, come; she is going." I wanted to run in, but my impression is that I fainted, for I was found on the floor when it began to get light. Never, surely, did sadder Christmas break than that which looked on our little house at Farningham, and its motherless children, myself the oldest, and therefore the saddest of them all. I very well remember going to the funeral, four little black-robed figures. I walked with my father next to the coffin, behind us the other three, Rebecca, Hephzibah, and Tom, the last poor little

fellow only just able to toddle. Then came my mother's father and mother, and after them a long procession of her brothers and sisters, for they were a large family. There was a great company of mourners, for most of the villagers of both Farningham and Eynsford attended. Somebody put into my trembling hands, after it was all over, this text, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you, and ye shall be comforted" (Isa. lxvi. 13).

CHAPTER III

GIRLHOOD

MY father often said that I never had a girlhood, but grew at once from a child into a woman.

Certainly the responsibilities of life pressed very heavily upon me from the time of my mother's death. At first the aunt whom we loved, Miss Mary Bowers, who nursed my mother through her last illness, lived with us, and we had a few months of subdued peace and happiness. She was a sweet woman, whom everybody loved, and she was very tender and good to us; but she herself only lived a little while, I think less than a year, after her sister.

The death of our aunt made a sad difference to our home, and we children never had womanly care afterwards. A young cousin lived with us for some months, but she was scarcely any older than I. When I think of that time, the formative period of a girl's life, I am filled with thankfulness to the kind Providence who watched over me and my sisters, so young, and so unprotected. My father, though I did not know it, had at the time pressing financial difficulties which worried him, and made things harder for us all. I used to wish

he would give us a step-mother, for I felt then, and feel still, that though it may be hard to have an unsympathetic step-mother, it is yet harder for motherless children to be without a woman to look after them. Of course I had to leave school and do the "housekeeping" and the work of the house, and I am sure that it was done very badly. But I was only twelve years and a few months old, and the others were younger. We were left very much to ourselves, and I still think it was a bad time for a girl to pass through.

Reading was my chief consolation, and I had not much time for that. My father gave us two monthly magazines, the "Teacher's Offering," and the "Child's Companion." In one of these was a series of descriptive articles on men who had been poor boys, and risen to be rich and great. Every month I hoped to find the story of some poor ignorant *girl*, who, beginning life as handicapped as I, had yet been able by her own efforts and the blessing of God upon them to live a life of usefulness, if not of greatness. But I believe there was not a woman in the whole series. I was very bitter and naughty at that time. I did not pray, and was not anxious to be good.

But there were a few people who loved me, especially a Sunday school teacher; and it was love that saved me. One Sunday morning, as I sat with our class in the gallery, my head was throbbing and my heart was burning with indignation and anger. My teacher beckoned me to sit next to her, and when the sermon began she gently took my hand in hers. My first impulse was to draw it back, for I was in antagonism

with the whole world, but there was a look of infinite compassion in her eyes that drew me to her. A very short sermon it seemed that day, and as it proceeded all bitterness died out of my heart. At first compunction, then penitence, then resolve, then peace took possession, of me, and I was quite another child when the service came to an end, for my heart was full of love and joy. This teacher was my namesake, though not related to me. She was Miss Eliza Hearn, of Eynsford, and at this time mistress of the British school. I recall her as a little winsome lady, young and pale, and very gentle. She was always good to me, and I longed to go to day-school again that I might be with her. By fits and starts I went, but very irregularly, and my sisters did not fare much better than I. After a year or two we had everything to do, washing, mending, scrubbing, cooking. Poor father, his must have been the hardest lot of all!

Miss Hearn did a good deal for me and for the rest of the girls in many ways. Sixty years ago the elementary education of the British schools was carried on by very different methods from those of the Council schools of the present day. The great book of the school was the Bible. The teachers were not obliged to pass government examinations, but they were required to be members of some Christian Church, and to love, revere, and teach the Book of books. The first hour of every morning was devoted to religious instruction. We sang a hymn, and our teacher prayed with us, after which we repeated a prayer ourselves. Then we had a long Bible-lesson, the most interesting and important of the whole

day. Miss Hearn gave the lesson herself, and taught it very thoroughly. She must have been an excellent teacher, her lessons were vivid and impressive, and they remained with us. Even now I can remember some of them. Not content with the morning scripture-lesson, the Friday afternoon of each week was given to religious instruction. This was really an evangelistic service for children, and our teacher would speak to us individually and very earnestly, using her influence to urge us to give ourselves to God. Somehow there was another look on her face and there were other tones in her voice when she talked to us about our Saviour. I am sure that her pleading words and Christian life had a great influence on the elder girls. But what would school managers say to such a teacher now?

One of my greatest regrets, even now, is that my attendance at the Eynsford British school was so perfunctory and intermittent. It was all the schooling that I had, and it can well be imagined that it has been exceedingly difficult to follow out the various pursuits of my life without any learning worth the name. I am so glad that compulsory education has been secured for the children of these happier days.

My father was the village postmaster. I helped him to sort the letters, and whenever there was an address in a particularly good handwriting, I copied it and tried to imitate it. I remember being told later that there was no style of my own in my handwriting—it was little wonder!

My ignorance was a constant burden to me, and I tried many devices to lessen it. Fond of reading as I

was, I did not really enjoy the study of lesson-books, but I strove to make myself learn from them. Through one summer I rose at five o'clock every morning and went out with a book in my hand, but out-of-doors in the dewy meadows, or in the woods, vocal with the song of birds, I really could not study any printed book, and getting up early made me too tired. Our days were in any case long enough. My father was an early riser, and, during the summer months especially, he liked to have us all up. "Come, my dears," he used to say as soon as the clock struck six, "the beautiful sun is shining upon you, and it is between six and seven!" By this time circumstances were more satisfactory with us.

My father was peculiarly good in many ways. In our worst days there were certain things that we never had to do. He did not believe that cleaning shoes was a girl's work, and on cold winter mornings we never came downstairs without finding a cheery fire burning in the grate ready for us, and a look of cosy comfort in our living-room. Then, too, excepting in those sad times when we, or others, had vexed him, he was always bright and kind, and full of fun and jokes; and if we ventured to invite our friends to tea he could always be trusted to be good to them, and to enter into our little social enjoyments as heartily as we did ourselves. We used not to bother him beforehand with any thought of expense or trouble! We had high times making cakes and tarts, but always when he was out of the way. Yet I never remember an angry word, either at the time or afterward. He took the good things and enjoyed them

with the rest of us, and paid the bills in due course. But we knew better than to let these festivities occur too frequently.

In my desperate pursuit after knowledge I tried hard to burn the midnight tallow (we had no oil in those days), and many a "long eight" have I wasted in the attempt. We were sent to bed before ten, but I was always sleepy, and resorted to one very immoral device to keep myself awake. When making tea for the family in the afternoon, after having infused the leaves, and before filling the pot, I used to pour off a cup of this strong decoction, and surreptitiously take it into my bedroom. I am afraid my father never knew this. I must have had a good digestion, or it would certainly have been ruined by the quantities of cold, strong tea I imbibed late at night. Of course I knew my father would not approve of my studying at midnight, and I was wretched in doing it. Once my heart sank within me as I listened to a conversation between him and a man who had come into the post-office.

"Is there any one ill at your house, Mr. Hearn?"

"No, thank you; I am happy to say we are all pretty well."

"Oh, I am glad to hear it. I was afraid somebody was ill. I had to be out last night looking after a horse, and I saw a light burning in one of your bedroom windows, between twelve and one o'clock."

"Ah," said my father, "not for long, I suppose?"

"Yes; it was burning when I first went by, and still burning when I came back."

I wished I could hide somewhere, but knew I must

face the matter out. My father looked very judicial. "Now, Polly, I suppose you heard what Mr. Sharp said."

"Yes, father; there was a light in our room. I was trying to study. I am ashamed of myself for being ignorant, and you know you cannot spare me to go to school."

"But what were you doing?"

"I was learning some geography."

"Fetch your books down and show them to me."

I brought down some cheap copy-books, with badly written pages, full of descriptions of the places that I dreamed about, and never hoped to see. My father said that he did not think such knowledge would ever be of much use to me. He said it was not honourable of me to say "Good night" to him at the door and pretend I was going to bed, and then wait up to read. It was setting the others a bad example, and I was never to do it again. For a long time I did not, and then yielded to temptation once more. But the days made me so sleepy that even the strong tea failed to keep me awake, and frequently I have been so tired that I have lain down intending to get a short nap, and have only waked at six the next morning, cold and cramped, with all my clothes on, and the candle burnt down in the socket. One night I awoke in terror, for the room was full of smoke. The candle was broken in the middle, and had bent over, and set the fringe on the dressing-table alight. The flames spread quickly, and already the hangings of the bed were on fire. I saw that it was hopeless for me to cope with it. On the impulse

of the moment I opened the window, and in a second the whole room seemed to be in flames. In an agony of fear I called my father instantly. He was always a good friend in trouble, and he succeeded in extinguishing the fire. I was more dead than alive when I began to undress, and thankful to creep into bed. I remember he kissed me, and all he said was, "I should think that now you have had enough of this, and that in the future you will see it is wisest to obey your father."

I felt it only too deeply.

Perhaps it was really as a result of this that my father began to consult with me as to the possibility of my going to school again. He said that he could not afford to keep me without work, but since I was so very anxious to learn, and my sisters were growing older, he thought I might go to school for part of the days. He asked me if I would like to learn to do the shoe-binding. He told me that he paid away a good deal of money every week for having this done, and thought I could do it, if I would like to try. I said I would like it very much. He promised to show me how it was done, and told me that he would pay me, but added that I must pay him back something for my board and lodging, and have anything that was over for myself. I soon became rather an expert binder, and was particularly praised for my buttonholes; but I had hard work with one thing and another, and I did not begin to be rich. Indeed, I was generally in my father's debt, but I went to school again, always taking my work with me to do in the dinner hour, and glad at heart to be with my beloved

Miss Hearn once more, and to grow a little less ignorant every week.

About this time, when I was perhaps fourteen, the minister at the Baptist chapel at Eynsford was the Rev. William Reynolds, who was an astronomer, and had a very fine telescope. He lived in the house in which Mr. Rogers had died—the next but one to ours—and was very neighbourly, appearing to take a most kindly interest in me. I spent many an evening in his study, looking through the telescope, and learning many wonderful things about the sun, moon, and stars, all of which I am sorry to say I have quite forgotten now. I think his difficulty as a teacher of astronomy was that he could not comprehend the extreme ignorance of his pupil, and make allowance for a young mind that was then, and indeed was always, utterly unscientific. But he was very good to me in many ways, lending me books, and talking to me on all sorts of subjects.

One thing he did which I have ever thought much too bad.

My sister Rebecca was an exceedingly pretty girl, with the loveliest eyes and the longest lashes I have ever seen. She was very trim and dainty in her dress, and attractive in her manners. It was only natural that she cared a little for the simple pleasures (they were not many) that were possible in our village. The great worldly day of the year was Farningham Fair day, October 15th. We were never allowed to go to the fair. Our part was to watch the people pass by, all dressed in their best attire, and occasionally to hear reports of the shows and dances, and all the gay things

that were done there. Rebecca had a great desire to go. It happened that she had a very pretty new dress and hat, and we knew that she would have looked as sweet as the best. A neighbour who was going to take her own little girls invited Rebecca to join them, so my sister told me about it and asked my advice. I advised her to go by all means. "There can be nothing really wicked in going to a fair," I said, "and I do not know why we should not have good times like other girls." We decided not to say anything about it to our father until afterwards, when we might perhaps confess. Of course, if we had asked permission, and he had said "No," it would have ended the matter; but we decided that she should run the risk, so we said she had been asked out to tea to a neighbour's, as she had. She went, spent a couple of hours in the field, and came home quite early, her sweet face all aglow with pleasure. We felt that we had done a very bold thing, but we were quite unprepared for what followed. Mr. Reynolds had himself given up that afternoon to the fair; that is, he had adjusted his telescope so as to get the field in full view, and he had picked out all the people whom he knew, especially my sister, whom he watched a long time. He was beforehand with us in regard to our confession, for he told my father, and we were summoned before them. The minister described what he had seen, and "more in sorrow than in anger" the two men talked to us about our great sin. I had the worst of it, as being the eldest of the family who ought to have a better influence over my sister. The only excuse I could offer was that I wanted her to go and enjoy herself, and I

said I wished to know all about the fair myself. We two poor little offenders stood before our judges, wondering what punishment would be meted out; but our worst fears fell short of the reality. We were not beaten, nor shut up; what did occur was that Mr. Reynolds spoke of the thing on Sunday, in his sermon. He mentioned no names, but our faces burned with shame, and all the congregation knew that "Rebecca Hearn had been to the fair." I think to-day that it was very mean of the minister, and I believe that our father had much more sympathy with us than with him in regard to the affair.

After my teacher, Miss Hearn, left the neighbourhood, I was put into the senior class at Sunday school. The teacher was Miss Isabella Rogers, my father's cousin, afterwards Mrs. Creasey, of whom I have already spoken as having taught me to write. It was while I was in her class, and when I was between fourteen and fifteen years of age, that I became possessed by a desire to join the Church. No one, I think, had before that time become a member at so early an age, and the minister, though exceedingly pleased with my wish, was a little in doubt. Was I able to give a reason for "the hope that was in me"? I do not think that I was very well able. I knew so little, and it was not an easy thing to enter a Church that was both Calvinistic and Strict Baptist. Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds were kind to me, and my friend and teacher, Miss Rogers, treated me with a tender solicitude, the memory of which warms my heart to-day. After several interviews with the pastor, he told me that he would bring my name before

the Church at the next meeting. Two deacons were appointed to see me, and when I heard the name of one, Mr. Cooper, a farmer who lived at Ash, I felt sure that the Church would not accept me, because only a few Sundays before, during the morning service, he had come out of his seat and walked across the gallery on purpose to rebuke me for laughing. However, he seemed to have forgotten the circumstance, and was surprisingly kind. The difficulty was that I could not remember when I was converted or if I ever had been. There was no special time. I had not been heart-broken for my sins, nor had I passed through any terrible phase of repentance. I had never wept on my knees, nor spent whole nights in prayer, as some of my friends and companions had done. All I knew was that I loved and trusted the Saviour, and believed that He was able to save and keep me, and that I wanted, above all else, to serve and please Him. A few things I remembered that had impressed me—my mother's life and death, my father's prayers, and the love of two or three Christian women. My impulse and desire were toward religion. I loved the Bible, and the house of God was dear to me. I have often risen an hour earlier in the morning and hurried through a hard day's work that I might go to the prayer-meeting in the evening. Several persons had exercised a most beneficent influence on me. There was one, Mary Thorpe, who worked in the paper-mill, but who was a refined Christian gentlewoman, and who was for some time my Sunday school teacher. She held the class in a square pew of the chapel. It consisted of five or six girls, and I think that every one of

us was loved and prayed into trying to be good by her. But I could name no definite experience or time that marked my passing from carelessness to earnestness. I often wonder what I said that satisfied the deacons, for I suppose they were satisfied, as I was asked to come before the Church at the next meeting. This was a trying ordeal. I sat on a form in the middle of the vestry. The minister and deacons sat in a square place, with their backs to the window, and the other members of the Church were in various seats around. The minister was very gentle, but he put a good many close questions to me. "Why do you think that you are saved?" "Because I love the Lord Jesus Christ." "What about good works?" "I have none. It is all of grace." This I knew was the answer he wanted. Certain questions respecting election, predestination, and justification were put to me, but beyond saying that they were scriptural doctrines I do not know what I replied. I wish I did, for my answers must have been very curious. But one thing I knew, and know still, that these Calvinist and Strict Baptists lived, for the most part, very beautiful lives, that they were obviously set apart from the rest of the people, that their Christian joyousness was wonderful, and that I longed to be as they were. Young people who join our Churches to-day find their entrance into the fold less barred than I did.

I must have been born a Baptist. Not a doubt assailed me as to the proper persons to receive baptism, nor the mode in which it was to be given. "The disciples first believed, then were baptized, then were added to the Church." Mr. Reynolds put one question

to me, which I answered glibly enough. "Would you think it unscriptural to take the Lord's Supper with unbaptized believers?" I thought for a moment, "Who were unbaptized believers?" At that time our chapel was the only Nonconformist place of worship for many miles around. Later a Wesleyan cause was started at Farningham, but then only the Church of England and the Baptists occupied the ground. I concluded that the question must refer to the Church people, and I am afraid that I had no doubt that they were the believers who were wrong. Certainly I never went to church, if that was what Mr. Reynolds meant, and I expressed the opinion that it *was* unscriptural to take the Communion with others than Strict Baptists! I retained that opinion for nearly a whole year afterward, but happily not longer, and always I have loved the Church service.

The picture of myself as I sat there, a child among the elders, often recurs to me. I was small for my age. I remember that I wore a lilac print dress, and it was, I think, the first dress I had worn with long sleeves. I was very much in earnest. I longed with a great longing that this little company would accept me as a member, and receive me into their midst, and allow me to be baptized, and take the Lord's Supper with them. I felt that I was very unworthy, young, and poor, and of no account, but my one plea and qualification was that I was full of love to Jesus and His people. It was because with all my youthful fervour I wanted to follow my Lord and obey His commands, that I asked to be baptized. I was very nervous and frightened but

presently the minister asked me to retire for a few minutes, while they consulted about me. I went out into the chapel ground among the trees, for the moments of suspense that followed. I scarcely dared to hope that their decision would be favourable; but it was my father who called me back, and there was a happy look on his face as he kissed me.

"Marianne," said Mr. Reynolds, "we are all very much interested in what you have told us, and the friends have decided to receive you into Church fellowship after baptism."

It was almost more than I could bear, and I had to choke back my tears.

Then the minister talked to me. He said that Christ had kept His promise "Those who seek Me early shall find Me," and that His power would be able to keep me faithful to the end. He reminded me that I had only to live a day at a time, and grace sufficient had been promised. He told me that after drawing attention to myself by a public profession of my faith, my conduct and life would be very closely watched. "We shall watch you narrowly, and prayerfully, to see whether you walk consistently, and adorn the doctrines which you have professed. The world, the enemies of Christ will watch you, and be quick to see if in anything you fall away. And Christ will watch you to see if you bring dishonour on His cause and name. Remember that you have no power in yourself to stand; your sufficiency must be of God, and to Him we commend you." I felt that it was all very solemn; but as the meeting concluded the

minister and the deacons besought for me the grace that I needed.

I was baptized on a lovely Sunday evening in June, Miss Rogers standing by me: and I took my first communion, with heavenly gladness in my soul, on the following Sunday.

OUR FAMILY GROUP.

CHAPTER IV

BEGINNINGS

EARLY in the year 1852 the oversight of the Baptist Church, at Eynsford, was taken by the Rev. Jonathan Whittemore. Mr. Whittemore was born at Sandy, in Bedfordshire, in the year 1802. At a very early age he resolved to be a minister, and found his recreation in preparing sketches of sermons. The real work of his life began when he entered the publishing business of his relative, Mr. Baynes, of Paternoster Row. Henceforward, publishing and preaching occupied all his powers. Among the first of his literary engagements was that of bringing out the collected works of Dr. J. Owen, a whole library of divinity. Other standard works of general usefulness followed. At the age of eighteen, he was baptized by the Rev. J. Peacock, in Goswell Road, London. A few years later he opened a publishing business of his own at Brighton, and he was one of the first to draw public attention to the claims of the fishermen of our coasts. The first Bethel chapel there was erected through his instrumentality, and he organized Sunday schools for the fishermen's children. He worked among them with all the enthusiasm of youthful devotion,

and raised the social and moral condition of many families. Of course, his efforts so joyfully put forth for others re-acted upon his own life. His Brighton experiences were the best possible preparation for his future career. He soon became known as an occasional preacher of considerable power, and in the year 1831 he was unanimously invited to become the minister of the Baptist church at Rushden, in Northamptonshire. There he remained twenty years as a village pastor; and the conditions of this ministry were such as to set his thoughts at leisure and allow him to take an outlook over the world. His keen desire to publish grew within him apace, and he brought out several publications, magazines, and books. He was very dissatisfied with certain defects in the methods of worship among Dissenters, and he originated several important publications, notably the "Standard Tune-book," which introduced Gregorian music into our churches. It was, too, during Mr. Whittemore's residence in Rushden that *The Baptist Messenger* was started. He derived the greatest possible pleasure from his publishing exploits, but very little financial satisfaction; indeed, pecuniary profit was never a first consideration with him. In some of his efforts he was associated with Mr. Thomas Phillips, printer and bookseller, of Northampton. I have received a letter which throws an amusing light upon this time. My correspondent says :—

"I was apprenticed to the late Mr. Thomas Phillips; when I had been with him about two years he hired me out to several printers in other parts of the county, and at about the end of 1848 I went to Rushden to set up the letter-press for a

tune-book which Mr. Whittemore was bringing out, in conjunction with Mr. Alpheus Andrews. These two were amongst the pioneers of printing music from electro-type plates, and like many other pioneers they lost heavily. Mr. Whittemore was sued, and judgment was given against him. He could not pay, and was committed to Northampton county gaol; there he wrote a pamphlet entitled 'The judgment brought to the test of Law, Policy, and Fact.' I used to take the proofs to the prison, and after Mr. Whittemore had read them, I used to play at marbles with him."

Notwithstanding his financial failures, his life and work at Rushden were very highly valued. He was known to be a man of high integrity and of a warm and generous spirit. He was a great Temperance leader, and was characterized by much enthusiasm and courage.

Mr. Whittemore's arrival at Eynsford introduced a new interest into the church life there. His ministerial abilities might have found a far larger sphere, but the lanes and fields and hop-gardens of this lovely part of Kent attracted him, and especially the fact that Eynsford is only twenty miles from London, where he spent the middle of most weeks. His talk about books and newspapers and publishing matters generally quickened in the minds of several young people a latent desire to write. I had already written rhymes for friends' birthdays, and other local happenings. When, through any accident, these fell into Mr. Whittemore's hands, I always had a bad time. He would make me listen while he read them to me, laying strong emphasis on their faults and weaknesses, and with most aggravating scorn in his voice. I kept on, however, in spite of his adverse opinion,

only being careful to pledge my friends to secrecy. A little girl, connected with our family, died, and I wrote some verses and sent to the child's mother, a lady of fine intellectual ability. She wrote a short account of her daughter, and put my verses in it. Mr. Whittemore read this account during his funeral sermon. There was no name attached to the verses, and he, believing them to have been written by the lady herself, said, before reading them, "I do not know the author of these lines, but they are very beautiful." I was quietly sitting in our pew at the back of the chapel, with my father, and I had a moment of keen joy, not unmixed with pride, for I knew that nothing would have induced him to speak thus had he known the words were mine. But I owe everything to Mr. Whittemore's criticisms of my first efforts, which made me more painstaking. It was soon after this that I was ambitious enough to send twelve verses to a magazine, called, I think, *The Gospel Magazine*. The title was "Music in Heaven." Of course, in those early days I knew all about that subject! The magazine appeared every month, and after the lapse of twelve my poem was printed, and occupied exactly a page.

In the same year that Mr. Whittemore came to Eynsford, 1852, I went to Bristol. A friend, Miss Bamford, who had been the mistress of the British school at Eynsford, removed to the Western City, and I became her assistant in the Durdham Down school. This change was a very interesting and pleasant one to me. All my life had been spent in villages, and this delightful old city appealed to my imagination, while

the larger life, which I enjoyed there, was a wonderful education. Its quays and bridges, its narrow streets and old houses, its cathedral and old churches, its ships and boats and rivers were a constant source of fascination to me. In imagination, I watched the ships go out over the great sea, and arrive at their destinations in foreign countries. I had never seen a ship before, or a great river, and the sea was at that time only a dream. Every walk, therefore, had some new wonder to reveal to me, of life and activity. A walk down the "Steps" and through the streets was a holiday. It seemed to me that there was a great difference between the men of Kent and the Bristol men, and it was always a treat to talk with the West Country people. Indeed, I fell in love with them from the first, a love which has lasted for the rest of my life. Everybody I met seemed to show me some kindness. Miss Bamford and I were invited to a teachers' picnic. It was held in the beautiful woods by the side of the picturesque Severn, and the lofty hills and rich scenery filled my heart with gladness. The teachers, too, were all most kind people. Miss Matilda Lewis was especially good to the plainly dressed, timid little stranger from Kent, and we there commenced a friendship which has remained unbroken for more than fifty years. She, too, was a Baptist, and sang in the choir of Counterslip church, and she advised me to attend the services there, which I did, listening when possible to the Grand Old Man, called "Father Winter." Sometimes, on very wet or very hot Sundays, I stopped half-way at Highbury chapel, where the Rev. David Thomas was minister, and though I cannot, at this

time, remember any of the sermons, I can very distinctly recall the impression made by them. It always seemed to me that there I was among a sacred aristocracy of Nonconformists. Sometimes I attended the cathedral, and I well remember being present there at a Memorial Service on the day of the funeral of the Duke of Wellington. For the first time I heard the Dead March in Saul, which affected me greatly. The place, of course, was crowded, but being small and resolute, I managed to push my way up to the very front, and I have never forgotten that I sat among the white-robed singers in the choir, one of whom made room for me just inside one of the stalls, and allowed me to look over his book. I felt very proud, but then I was only seventeen! The way in which I got out of the crowd also remains in my memory. I suppose I felt faint and looked white, for a gentleman took me up and carried me through as the crowd made way for us, and I found myself out in the cool air in a very short time.

I was quite happy in my work at Bristol. The Durdham Down school was not a large one; the managers were chiefly members of the Society of Friends, and they were very good to me. One lady, Miss Hallam, came to the school the most frequently. Another lady was Mrs. Birt, the widow of a missionary who had died on his way to India, where he had hoped to labour. His wife went on and tried to do the work which he was prevented from doing, but after a few years, quite broken in health, she had to return. This sweet gentlewoman spoke little of her sorrows, but smiled away those of others. Through these kind friends some pleasant

incidents occurred to me. They invited me to meet Mary Carpenter, one of the finest women of our generation, whose work at Red Lodge on behalf of the perishing and dangerous classes, and especially for the children, was pioneer work which has since been followed in all towns and cities. Also at Miss Hallam's house I met Clara Lucas Balfour, and was taken to hear her lecture.

I had the great happiness of becoming personally acquainted with that hero of faith, George Muller, and his wonderful work for the orphans. His own story of his life, published in 1837, was given to me. It is a spiritual romance. At the time that it was written the first orphan-houses were being established. He asked for a thousand pounds before his book was published, but he said not a word to any individual; he simply asked God. Money came to him from all quarters, both in large sums and small. It came anonymously sometimes, but never unexpectedly. When it came, whether in coin, jewels, or goods, the receiver was always grateful, but not surprised. As it was in the beginning, so it was always in the lives of Mr. Muller and his helper, Mr. Craik. The orphans had become a multitude in number when I was at Bristol, and there was always some fascinating story to hear of how a large consignment of boots and shoes had arrived just in the nick of time, or, when the balance was reduced to a shilling perhaps hundreds of pounds came by the next post. It was a very happy household, though so large a one, and it was an object-lesson to the world. The same spirit of trust characterized the teachers as

the head of the house, and I remember delightful talks I used to have with them. They had no fixed salaries, and were never certain whether or not quarter-day would bring them any money, but they never had the least anxiety, and proved that the path of faith meant the way of peace. I often heard Mr. Muller preach and pray, and was influenced by both. He was a quiet, unassuming, unpretentious man, whom God made great enough for magnificent service, through simple, child-like trust.

I enjoyed teaching in the Durdham Down school where I had charge of the highest class of girls. I knew very little, but was able to impart to them every scrap of information I possessed. I could not have passed an examination, but in those happy days it was not required of me, and I had spent a few weeks at the Home and Colonial College on my way down. The girls were good and teachable, and we were all interested together, for I learned the lessons they learned, and was like one of them. The time passed all too quickly, for it was full of life and interest.

When I had been at Bristol a year I had a very sad letter from my father, telling me that my sister Rebecca, next to me in age, was ill, and the doctor had pronounced it to be consumption. My sister was a lovely girl, and she looked like a strong and completely healthy one. It did not seem possible that she could be really seriously ill. But my father's letter was very grave, and he told me that I must come home as soon as I could be released from school. So I gave a month's notice, and at the end of the time, with a heavy heart, I said

good-bye to Bristol, and as I then thought, to all my best prospects in life.

I was glad to be at home again, and went with many resolves to be a better housekeeper than before I left home. I was a year older, with a year's experience, and was able to bring to my domestic work an increase of knowledge and patience. I had a loving welcome home, especially from my dear sister. It was easy to see, since the memory of my mother's illness remained with me, that Rebecca was following her. The mischief began at a midnight meeting, which she had walked through snow to attend, and to pray the old year out and the new year in. She dated her conversion from this meeting, which was therefore the beginning of a new life, as well as the beginning of the end. "Surely something can be done which will prolong her life," I said to the doctor. "Well, if you can take her away to the south of France," the doctor replied, "it is possible that she might live a few years instead of a few months." Of course that was utterly impossible, and so we had that very common experience of the poor. We watched our dear one get worse and weaker day by day, only putting off the end as far as we were able. But those months have always seemed to me a most sacred time. She was so bright and patient, and even happy. She had a very blessed realization of the Presence of Christ with her all the time. She was greatly beloved, and our little home became often a sanctuary of prayer and praise. When she passed away to the heaven that was so real to her, it seemed to be wonderfully near to us also.

During my sister's illness, when sitting with her in the garden, or watching by her bed at night, my thoughts had frequently set themselves into verse, and after her death I occasionally sent copies to magazines, saying nothing to anybody about them, and usually signing them "Echo." It struck me as something to be grateful for then, and does so still, that I never had one returned to me. It was two or three years after my "Music in Heaven" had appeared in the magazine that I sent a poem of ninety lines to *The Christian Cabinet*, a religious paper, which was then in circulation, and was afterwards incorporated with *The Christian World*. The title of the poem was "Let us Pray," and was inserted in the next number. Then Mr. Whittemore said that he must have a serious talk with me.

He began by asking me why I had not submitted the verses to him, since I knew of *The Baptist Messenger* which he edited. I replied that, because he had always ridiculed my efforts, I had not supposed that he would care to have anything I might write, and so had sent this poem to one who did not know me. He told me it was very cowardly to shrink from criticism, which was intended to do me nothing but good. I answered that I knew quite well that was true, but that I found his criticisms all the harder to bear because he was so sarcastic. If, however, he wished to have some contributions from me, I should be only too glad to hand them over. He told me of a new tune-book which he was bringing out, and invited me to try to write hymns for some of the new tunes, and presently he took me into confidence in regard to quite a number of magazines

and journals which he was projecting. Eventually he talked to me of what was the greatest hope of his life—a weekly religious paper, with very high aims, in which some of the leading wealthy Nonconformists of the time would interest themselves, and in which he thought I might help him.

These years at home were very joyous ones. Happily I had another sister, Hephzibah, who loved and helped me. She was more sensible and domesticated than I. Indeed, she was remarkably gifted in all the sweet mysteries of household ways, for certainly she had no one to teach her, since she was only a child of six when our mother died. She cared for me with almost more than a sister's love, and gave me time to write and study. Our brother Tom was a merry boy, and we three contrived to get all the pleasure possible out of life at this juncture, with our father to help us.

Most of our social life centred in the chapel. On my return from Bristol, when I offered my services to the superintendent to take a class in the school, he told me that the girls of the Bible class, being without a teacher, had asked that I would take it. I was fairly nonplussed by this suggestion, and said that I could not do it, for I was no older than the other girls, and certainly knew no more than they. He said that I could study the lesson during the week, and he hoped I would try. The girls themselves came to see me, and declared that they would not leave until they had persuaded me. So I yielded, and promised to do my best. We had a good many very happy Sunday afternoons. We were a class without a teacher, but everybody contributed something,

and whether or not we learnt much, we carried away from that corner pew many pleasant memories. I have still in my possession, and indeed not many days pass without my using it, a copy of Cruden's Concordance with which the girls presented me, and with my name written in it by Mr. Henry Rogers, the superintendent of the Sunday school. It has been worth its weight in gold to me. The inscription bears date December 17, 1857.

What glorious times we had, attending every service for which the chapel was opened! Our Sunday walks to and fro were delightful. I always felt we were like the glad tribes going up to Jerusalem. There would be a long line of us, ten or a dozen young people of both sexes, marching along and singing as we went, so that the mile between the two villages seemed as nothing. We would sing "All hail the power of Jesus' Name," to Miles Lane, or "Sweet is the work, my God, my King," to Montgomery, a capital tune to march to, though there was one better still which we always sang when the moon shone or the stars were unusually bright, "The spacious firmament on high." I never hear this sung now without wanting to keep time with my feet, as I did in those good old days. I often wonder whether the village chapels can be as much to those who worship in them to-day as they were to us.

I had some exceedingly kind friends and companions at this time, in better circumstances and better educated than I, whom it was a great joy to be with. I visited at their houses, they called for me to take walks with them, and they lent me books. But Mr. Whittemore

did most for me in this way. One day he brought me a copy of "Jane Eyre." "Here is a book, my girl," he said, "that is thrilling everybody. If you can write like this, you will do something." Alas! I only wished I could, and have been wishing it ever since. I had no sleep that night, and it haunted me for many nights afterwards. I had been taught that it was wicked to read novels, and this one marked my departure from that old limitation. Mr. Whittemore also gave me my first and only copy of "Shakespeare," writing in it my name and the words, "From her affectionate pastor." A great deal of trouble he had in consequence. That a minister should give a young member of his church "a volume of plays," seemed to some of the old members an outrageous thing. One anxious lady begged me to let her burn it, as she was sure it was an offence in the sight of God, and several who heard of it advised me not to read it; but of course it brought me into a new world, and filled me with wonder and admiration. One thing surprised me very much; it was to find some expressions which I had quite thought were only to be found in the Bible! Naturally I place a very high value on that copy of "Shakespeare."

So I was living and learning and loving, until my happy teens were left behind. I had a grand time on my twenty-first birthday. How it was managed I do not know, but we were a party of twenty-one to tea, in our little house, which could never have been intended to hold more than four. It was finely decorated for the occasion. Over the fireplace in the small parlour, a friend, Thomas Sharwood, to whom my sister was afterwards

married, had put up, in letters made of leaves and berries, the motto, "God bless dear Polly." I had, indeed, a happy coming-of-age.

Rather often at this time, and previously, as I started on Sunday morning for school and chapel, I was called back to receive a reminder, which no doubt I needed :—

"Polly!"

"Yes, father."

"Listen a moment—

> "'Whate'er your parts or virtues be,
> Oh, cultivate humility;
> Be unobtrusive, meek, retired,
> Seek to be useful, not admired.'"

CHAPTER V

THE CHRISTIAN WORLD

THE birth of a new journal is an occurrence of far less importance now than it was fifty years ago, because to-day fresh papers are springing up in all directions. But when *The Christian World* first made its appearance it had a wide field to itself, and no competitors. A religious newspaper was needed at that time almost more than anything beside, and especially a paper which, while respecting the Church of England, came to the support of all denominations alike. Between these denominations there was almost no union. Differences were acute, and stood for principles, so that friendships were frequently denounced as infidelities and unfaithfulness. Most of the various sects that were strong enough had their own publications, in which were chronicled their doings and sayings. It was only when *The Christian World* became the chronicle of the Churches that men and women began to understand each other. A very fighting world it was over which it raised the flag of truce. And the gracious ideal of brotherhood in its present sense had only appealed to the few as against the many. This was one of the great needs of the day which the paper was born to meet.

Was it strange that one of the pioneers in this crusade of toleration was the minister of a church founded on the doctrines of predestination and election, whose members believed there were few who should be saved, and who refused the Lord's Supper to all believers who had not been immersed? I think not. Extremes provoke revolt.

To my own mind the greatest and most far-reaching feature in *The Christian World* was the "Chronicle of the Churches," which was from the first arranged for. It taught people to know and understand each other better, and therefore to look with more love than suspicion upon the character and doings of the various denominations. Its motto was splendidly chosen: "In things essential, unity; in things doubtful, liberty; in all things, charity."

Before its appearance, it was announced as a "Companion for Leisure Hours, A Christian Treasury, and Readings for Sundays at Home, and as a Record of Passing Events." It was no small advantage that in those times when newspapers were dear, and often difficult for country people to procure, *The Christian World* would give all the news of the week. It was certain beforehand that for this reason, if for no other, it would be sincerely welcomed in the villages and smaller towns.

In the great centres of religious thought, where the minds of men were awakening to new ideas, the promises of the paper were very good news indeed, although no prophet was sufficiently gifted to foresee future developments, or to dream of the power for righteousness and truth to which the journal was destined.

MRS. WHITTEMORE.

REV. JONATHAN WHITTEMORE.

(The first number of *The Christian World* in his hand.)

"The Christian World"

On Good Friday, 1857, a party of young people, of whom I was one, set out to walk from Farningham to Foots Cray, a distance of five miles, to attend the annual meeting of the West Kent Sunday School Union. As we passed the road leading to Dartford, our nearest railway station, the omnibus drove by. Mr. Whittemore was seated on the top, and he held up a little roll of paper for me to see, and then threw it down. One of the young men caught it, and handed it to me. It was the first number of *The Christian World*. I folded it into a small compass—not a difficult feat, for it was a very small paper—and put it away in my pocket, feeling quite shy and nervous. There it remained unopened for several hours, though I was longing to know whether there was really any bit of my writing in it. After a time, in the secluded part of a lane, I opened it, and saw for the first time the name "Marianne Farningham" in print. It was by Mr. Whittemore's advice that I adopted the name of my birthplace. I had chosen "Echo," which he did not like, and I had not the courage to use my own surname, for it seemed presumptuous, as I was only a poor village girl. Mr. Whittemore thought Marianne Farningham was a well-sounding name. I think so, too. Above the name in this first number of *The Christian World*, bearing date April 9, 1857, there were three inches of verse. This is a copy—

"LORD, SAVE US: WE PERISH.

"Our fragile barks are tossed on life's rough ocean,
The tempest draweth near,
And we are driven about in wild commotion,
And well-nigh faint with fear.

"Above our head the dense black cloud is lowering,
The vivid lightnings flash,
The heaving billows are around us roaring,
The mighty thunders crash.

"Far from our home, and all we love and cherish,
Our way we cannot see;
All, all is dark—Lord, save us or we perish,
Our eyes are turned to Thee.

"Abide with us while yet the tempest rages,
And shield us from the strife;
Hide us within Thy cleft, O 'Rock of Ages,'
And still preserve our life.

"Speak to the waters: even they obey Thee,
Thou holdest them in Thy hand;
Hasten our voyage o'er the deep, we pray Thee,
And bring us safe to land.

"Receive us at the blissful port of Heaven,
The shore of cloudless peace,
And our hearts' praises shall to Thee be given,
In songs that never cease."

MARIANNE FARNINGHAM.

Darenth Vale, March 26th.

The first number of *The Christian World* had a very modest appearance. It thus introduced itself to the public in—

"A WORD TO OUR READERS.

"The proprietors of this journal believe that the progress of popular education cannot be more effectually advanced than by a cheap and thoroughly healthy literature, such as that which it is their purpose to supply. They rejoice to know that of late years numerous efforts, more or less successful, have been made by Christian philanthropists to create reading for the people of so attractive a nature, and at so low a price, as

to drive out of the market much debasing rubbish produced by a ribald press. But, notwithstanding all that has yet been done, there is still unhappily abundance of room, and great necessity for augmented exertions in the same good cause; and we appeal, therefore, to all true friends of the people—especially to those who are ever foremost in labours of this sort, ministers of the Gospel, Sunday school teachers, and Church members generally—to aid us in establishing a cheap family newspaper conducted on pure principles, and pervaded by a Catholic spirit."

Intimation was given of the future standpoint and policy of the journal. In politics it would advocate Reform, Retrenchment, and Peace. It would be the friend of Progress, but the foe of Revolution. In Religion it would be decidedly evangelical, but wholly unsectarian.

Its appearance was timely. A general election was just over, and the leading article had for its subject Lord Palmerston's Cabinet. It contained two sermons, and instalments of two serial stories. The sermons were by the late Rev. W. Jay, of Bath, and the coming man, Charles Haddon Spurgeon. The "Chronicle of the Churches" was a feature in this first number, as it has always been; and there was an article which contained a warning for young men who smoke!

There was at this time no Sunday school journal in existence, but the founder of *The Christian World* was an earnest Sunday school man, and one department was allotted to Sunday schools, under the heading of the "Children's Treasury." Addresses, model lessons, and reports of anniversaries were included. A few

weeks after the commencement of *The Christian World* the first great Sunday School Convention was held in Manchester, and the journal drew special attention to this.

The year 1857 was a very notable one in many respects. In the religious world Mr. Spurgeon was drawing immense crowds, and New Park Street chapel, the scene of his first pastorate, had become far too small for the congregations. Mr. Spurgeon had been urged to make the experiment of preaching in Surrey Gardens Music Hall. It was a new idea, and many people did not approve of it, but there was a very earnest desire at this time, and before mission halls had been erected, to hold special services for the people. Exeter Hall was used for the purpose. But these services were stopped on a point of ecclesiastical order by the incumbent of the parish in which Exeter Hall was situated. Mr. Spurgeon and his congregation migrated to the Surrey Music Hall, and in the twentieth number of *The Christian World* dated August 21, 1857, there is an account of a trip to Rosherville, taken by Mr. Spurgeon and seven hundred members of his congregation. They travelled in steamboats, and found the gardens "a place to spend a happy day."

Many subjects claimed the notice of the writers in the early numbers of *The Christian World.* The year of its commencement was that of the Conference of the Evangelical Alliance at Berlin. It was also the year of the first Handel Festival at the Crystal Palace. This, too, was the year of the Indian Mutiny and

Massacre of Missionaries, and October 7 was kept as a Day of Humiliation. In one of the last numbers for the year there was an article on the dowry of the Princess Royal, who was to be married early the next year. It had been proposed that the nation should give her £40,000 as a marriage portion, and an annuity of £8000 a year for life. *The Christian World*, in accordance with its promised advocacy of retrenchment, demurred to this, but the article had a very good-natured conclusion: "Nevertheless, as we are a well-to-do people, and rather proud of our means, we should not have liked the first-born of our Royal House to go forth from her people and country without taking with her a substantial token of our love for her mother, and gratitude to God that He has given us such a monarch, and made our ways so prosperous."

Mr. Whittemore was exceedingly gratified at the reception given by the churches of all denominations to the new journal. At once it was a power and a force for righteousness, although some people were afraid of it even from the first. Quite a fierce controversy raged over the question whether it would prove a Sabbath breaker. It would be the thin end of the wedge, many Sunday school teachers thought, if it were read on Sunday in the homes of the people! Mr. Whittemore hoped and intended that it should be, and its religious character was strictly maintained. All the same, many parents and grandparents insisted upon its being rigorously put away with most other things that were pleasant on Saturday nights. It would be inte-

resting, if we could possibly discover how many people keep it especially for Sunday reading now.

When Mr. Whittemore came back to Eynsford from London at the end of every week, there was always something to tell about *The Christian World.* He was fortunate in his staff, and his friends. I remember his talking to me about Mr. James Clarke, how charmed he was with him, and how convinced of his rare capacity. I little guessed then that *The Christian World* would really be made and upheld by Mr. Clarke, nor how deeply indebted I was to become to him personally in regard to the work of my life. Mr. Whittemore was quite exuberant one day when he told me that he had secured Emma Jane Worboise as a writer of stories for *The Christian World.* "She is a cultured lady," he said, "with wide experience of religious life and thought, and she is just at the right age—at her very best." I asked him what was the age at which a woman was at her best. He said, "About forty," adding, "You are not there yet."

I was interested, too, in the men who were writing leaders and articles for *The Christian World.* The best Nonconformist talent of the day was pressed into its service. Dr. Peter Bayne contributed very thoughtful papers for many years. Mr. Ritchie, "Christopher Crayon," came upon the scene only a little later.

When *The Christian World* was about eighteen months old, Mr. Whittemore asked me to write some prose pieces. At that time an American writer, who signed herself "Fanny Fern," had become very popular,

and he thought he would like something of the same kind for *The Christian World*. I therefore contributed every week, as well as the verses, a short prose sketch under the general heading of "Echoes from the Valley." It was at this time that I was very much astonished to find that I was to be paid for my work. The rate was not munificent; but it was a good beginning, and very soon was doubled. Farningham is in the Darent Valley, and this fact produced all sorts of pleasant associations and fancies in my mind, which caused me to date all that I did for some years from "Darenth Vale." I append one of the "Echoes from the Valley" to show the sort of thing which I wrote in my early days:—

"VERY COLD.

"Very cold! Snow, snow, snow, morning, noon and night! Wrap we never so carefully, walk we never so rapidly, to the fire press we never so closely, under hats and into bonnets, and round about cloaks, and through crevices, silently creeps the icy chill.

"Very cold! In some houses there is no ruddy glow of wood or coal, lighting the desolate hearthstone. At Coventry and Nuneaton, what heart-rending tales could the poor ribbon-weavers tell! What shrinking from the cold hand of death, the iron grasp of despair!

"Very cold! Some rich men button up their pockets, fold their arms over their hearts (if they have any) and 'pass by on the other side,' staying not to stifle the wail of the suffering. Some, wrapped in the light mantle of selfishness, speak no word of healing, give no smile of light and love.

"Very cold! And yet there is a great deal of warmth. Merrily ring the bells. Cheerily sound the songs of mirth under many a bright roof. Gatherings there are of brothers and sisters and friends long absent, the grasp of whose hand is warm and true as if the midsummer sun shone. Ah, *hearts* are not chilled by the winter's frost! Love is ever blooming fresh and beautiful. Bless God there is warmth still!

"Very cold? Ah! but some kindly hands are feeding the hungry ones in our loved country. Fires are lighted by Charity's delicate and strong hand, and many a widow's heart sings for joy. There are dinners for the old, dinners for the young—everybody wishing everybody 'A happy New Year.'

"Very cold? Ah! but God has made everything beautiful in its time. The softly falling snow, the icicles beautifying the cottage roof, the trees clothed in white, the hedgerows covered with purity. Truly our Father has made everything beautiful!

"Very cold! No, not very, while our hearts turn upward in love to our ever-loving Friend."

MARIANNE FARNINGHAM.

Darenth Vale.

In 1859 Mr. Whittemore thought I had written enough little sets of verses to make a book, and advised me to collect and arrange them for publication. Mr. Whittemore's wife was very kindly interested in this. I loved Mrs. Whittemore. Often in those days, when I found it so bitter to be motherless, she comforted me with almost a mother's love, and it gratified me to know that she thought my little things were worth putting into a volume. In 1860, "Lays and Lyrics of the Blessed Life," with a portrait of the author, was published by Benjamin Lowe, 31, Paternoster Row, and it was at once

received by a kindly public with surprising appreciation. Many editions of it have since been published. Some old people still pronounce it the best of my books.

On November 9, 1860, *The Christian World* was put into mourning for the death of the editor and proprietor, the Rev. Jonathan Whittemore. The end was very sudden, though not altogether unexpected by him. He had said several times, "I shall die in six months." There were many symptoms of paralysis. He would stop suddenly, and say, "There it is, creeping over me, like so many pointed instruments." But he continued his work. His last sermon was from the text "There will be weeping." It was very impressive and solemn. He seemed to feel himself near to eternity, and he tried to communicate the same feeling to his hearers. He had a singular impression that his work was done, and on the Monday he said that he would probably have to resign his charge. When the fatal stroke seized him, he said, "It has come now. I shall not leave this house again alive." He was buried in Abney Park cemetery. The funeral sermon at Eynsford was preached by the Rev. W. A. Blake, of Shouldham Street chapel, a personal friend of Mr. Whittemore's. His death was felt to be a great loss in very large circles.

The Christian World, after an appreciation, had this notice—

"Four years ago the idea of the establishment of *The Christian World* took complete possession of his nature. The writer of these lines was the first person he consulted upon the subject, who dissuaded him from what then seemed a

hazardous undertaking; but he made light of all the suggested obstacles, and urged the immense good that would be sure to flow from a widely circulated weekly penny periodical of this kind, conducted on catholic principles, and having constantly in view the highest good of humanity. The result has proved the soundness of his judgment, and was to him a source of deep satisfaction. From its beginning, *The Christian World* has made continuous progress, and never before had so extensive a sale as at the present moment; and it may be desirable to state, for the information of its readers, who will, one and all, doubtless derive consolation from the fact—that the paper will continue under the editorial management of those who have hitherto assisted in conducting it."

After Mr. Whittemore's death his periodicals and his estate passed to his widow with heavy responsibilities. Mr. Whittemore did not live long enough to see the great success of his ventures. But Mrs. Whittemore had a good friend in Mr. James Clarke, who worked very faithfully in her interests. The burden left was a great one. *The Christian World* and *The Sunday School Times* were bound to succeed in the long run, but in the meantime much skill and forethought were required in the conductorship. In the year after Mr. Whittemore's death, 1861, the Paper Tax was repealed. Mrs. Whittemore was greatly delighted. "At last," she said, "we may look for a profit, and my anxiety will be lessened." But Mr. Clarke went to see her, and make a proposal, which was that the removal of the paper duties should be celebrated by an enlargement of *The Christian World*. Poor Mrs. Whittemore was very disappointed. For some time she withheld her consent, while Mr. Clarke pleaded and persuaded. At length she agreed. On

October 4, 1861, the paper was enlarged, and the following announcement was made by the editor :—

"WE, AND YOU—A GIFT AND A REQUEST.

"Four years and a half ago was issued the first number of *The Christian World*. It was an experiment. To the honour of our countrymen we record to-day that the experiment has been completely successful, and in pursuance of our promise we begin the tenth half-year of our labours in this journal in the cause of Charity, Purity, and Truth, by presenting to our readers sixteen columns of additional matter, as a proof of gratitude for past support, and as a pledge of our perfect confidence that their prompt and generous co-operation will prove that we have acted wisely."

Among the last words which Mr. Whittemore said to his wife were "Trust Clarke!"—advice which she was wise enough to follow. Mr. Clarke had been the acting editor even before Mr. Whittemore's death, and he immediately took entire charge of the journal. This sagacious decision to give the readers the benefit of the cheapened paper naturally commended itself to the subscribers, and the result was an instant and very large increase in the circulation.

Mr. Clarke proved himself, in every respect, a delightful editor under whom to work. I believe that he, in faith and confidence, increased all our salaries. Certainly there was a never-to-be-forgotten evening, which I spent at his house at Clapham, when he told me that he would double mine.

Mr. and Mrs. Clarke and their family of three sons and three daughters had only lately removed to their

pleasant house on Clapham Common. I was shown over it by the youngest boy, a little fellow dressed in knickerbockers, who is at the present time the editor of *The Christian World*, Mr. Herbert Clarke.

In the enlarged paper, space was found for another contribution of mine. I began a series of articles for children under the heading of "Chats by the Sea," and increased the length of my articles called "Echoes from the Valley." Other contributions followed. In 1866 I wrote "A Sad Story of Family Life; or, Provoking Children to Wrath." All that I wrote for *The Christian World* was gathered into volumes, which were kindly welcomed by my public. Following very quickly "Lays and Lyrics of the Blessed Life," a volume of prose articles, called "Life Sketches and Echoes from the Valley," was published in book form. My friend Mr. George Creasey kindly offered to lend me fifty pounds to enable me to bring this volume out at my own risk. The first edition sold very quickly, and I was pleased, and he surprised, at the short time which passed before I repaid that loan, with sincere thanks.

But it must not be thought that I was the popular member of the staff. Christopher Crayon's articles were eagerly read in *The Christian World*, and the stories by Emma Jane Worboise were the most popular novels written at the time. Thousands bought the paper for these stories only, and each one, as it was completed, had a large sale in book form. They were healthy and interesting, and met a want in many Christian homes. I am glad to think they are still being sold and read in 1907, a new edition meeting almost the old success.

The circulation of the journal went up by leaps and bounds. The number for June 29, 1866, contained on the front page a picture of the new offices of *The Christian World*, in Fleet Street, an illustration which told its own story of progress; and on February 8, 1867, less than ten years after its birth, it was announced that—

"*The Weekly Circulation of* THE CHRISTIAN WORLD *exceeds One Hundred Thousand.*"

CHAPTER VI

NORTHAMPTON

IN the year that *The Christian World* was started it was borne in upon me that I must leave home, and go away to earn my own living, for my father's life was a struggle, and it was difficult to make both ends meet. My sister Hephzibah was old enough now to take my place at home. So I answered an advertisement in *The Christian World* for a teacher at Gravesend, and the situation was given to me. I have never been so lonely in all my life as during those first months at Gravesend, alone and in a strange place. I often walked along the streets, in which I knew no one, with tears running down my cheeks, because I was so solitary and sad. Our home had been a bright and happy one. My sister was so full of fun, and singing and laughter were constant sounds in our house. My life at the chapel, too, was so full of joy and gladness that I missed the companionship of those who were dear to me in Farningham and Eynsford more than words can say. And yet I am always glad to have had that experience, because I have ever since known how to sympathize with lonely girls. I was not solitary for any length of time. My sister and others came to see

me, and occasionally I went home for the Sunday—walking the eight miles that lay between Farningham and Gravesend, because I enjoyed it, and to save the train-fare. I was not long without friends in Gravesend. It was there that I became acquainted with Miss Gordge, the head-mistress of the largest school in the town, who was very good to me then, and for many years after. She had worked strenuously, and was at the head of her college list, but all too soon her health failed, and she was obliged to take a year's rest. This was a great grief to me, and I promised that when she was again able to teach I would go to her, if there were an opening. This promise changed the current of my life, for it was in consequence of it that, in 1859, I went to Northampton, where I have lived and done my life's work for nearly fifty years.

It was with many misgivings that I made the change, because I was happy and successful in my work at Gravesend, but chiefly because it took me so far from my home. I wanted to be with my friend, but I wanted to do what was right, and to be assured that it was in accordance with the will of God concerning me. As far as I knew, the only gain would be the companionship of my friend, which, however, was one which I most highly valued. The salary offered to me was no more than I was receiving at Gravesend, and there was no prospect that my life could be more usefully spent at Northampton than in Kent. My dear ones at home—my father and my sister—in their generous love, brought no pressure to bear upon me, put no impediment in the way, but were ready to forward my desires with all

kindness and good-will. I consulted Mr. Whittemore, who strongly advised me to accept the offer. He said the change to Northampton would in itself be an education, enlarging my outlook, and giving me a knowledge of life in many aspects, which would be greatly to my advantage. And he told me that at Northampton I should hear a man who preached like a prophet and prayed like a seraph—the Rev. John Turland Brown. My friends, on my last Sunday at home, in the homely fashion common to country Nonconformists, offered special prayers for me in the vestry of Eynsford chapel, beseeching God to bless and guide me, and to take care of me always.

So I came to Northampton, as the head-mistress of the infant department of the British school, which position I held for seven years, and in which I was very happy. I did not at first like Northampton, nor believe that I should remain very long in the town, but events —to which I shall afterward refer—occurred in the course of years, that availed to keep me there.

Northampton grows upon one. When I was first told that it was called "the proud beauty of the Midlands," the name seemed to me an absurd exaggeration, but now I think it is not too grand a designation. It stands on high ground, and is surrounded by wide breezy spaces. After the air of the Darent Valley, it was cold; but as our family had been liable to consumption, the probability is that the fresh, strong air was very beneficial to me and mine. Northampton is an old country town with much that is quaint in it; the market square is especially large, most of the houses surrounding

it are old, and the square presents still a lively scene on market days. The names of the streets recall the uses to which in old times they were put—Horsemarket, Marefair, Bull Lane, Sawpit Lane, Greyfriars, and The Drapery, the chief business street of the town. The old churches are very fine. No words could do justice to the beautiful monument of antique architecture, St. Peter's, or the remarkable round church of the Holy Sepulchre, in which, soon after my arrival, I heard Jenny Lind sing for the restoration funds. I found interesting old chapels, too, notably the Independent chapel on Castle Hill, the scene of the ministry of Dr. Doddridge who opened his academy at Northampton in 1729, and College Lane Meeting-House, built in 1714. It was to the latter quaint old place that I took my letter of introduction from Mr. Whittemore to the Rev. J. T. Brown, on my first Sunday morning in Northampton. It struck me as being a very tumble-down old place, with worn brick floor, and pews awry through their great age. I did not like it, and was glad to hear that a new chapel was soon to be built. First impressions are often wrong, but a sense of loneliness oppressed me at College Street for some years, and even after I had a seat in the new chapel. The secretary of the British schools, Mr. Walker, gave me and my friend a pressing invitation to attend the Congregational Church of Commercial Street, and sing in the choir, which for some time we did. The Rev. E. T. Prust, the pastor, and Mrs. Prust were among my first friends.

The people of Northampton were, as I soon discovered, friendly and hospitable, characteristics which

still abide, though the boys and girls whom I knew then are fathers and mothers now. It was soon evident that they were extremely political, and that the Liberals and Radicals made a great majority. When Mr. Bradlaugh came upon the scene an idea got abroad that Northampton was a town of secularist unbelievers. If in my travels I mentioned the name, I was several times met by an astonished question, "Can any good thing come out of Northampton?" But the idea was a mistaken one. The town had at that time, and has still, a larger average of church-going people than almost any other. It insisted on sending Mr. Bradlaugh to Parliament, not because it was less religious, but because it cared more strongly for liberty than most. But I am not a political partisan, though perhaps I ought to be ashamed to confess it!

My school work was not easy, for part of my duties was to give lessons to my assistants, the pupil teachers, and for this I was not really qualified as I ought to have been. My friend, however, was extremely kind to me, and generously assisted me in my difficulties during the years of our happy life together. I suppose they were strenuous years, but they were delightful ones. We both loved the fields and the meadows, and took walks to the pretty villages which lie so near to the town, and our home-life was peaceful and joyous. For some time we lived in the house of two Friends. All the four of us were engaged to be married, and we had some fun in arranging for our visitors, and in talking over prospects. My three friends were eventually married, but for myself, then and afterwards, I was made to know

that the sheltered life of a married woman was not God's will concerning me.

So I accepted His decision, and soon began to learn something of the law of compensation. I found that I had many friends to love and care for, and many whose friendships were intellectual blessings. My time of loneliness was quite lost and forgotten. My life during these years was increasingly busy. My school had grown in numbers, and my pen-work had grown also. I suffered a good deal in those days from neuralgia, and my holidays from school, when I always went home to Farningham, were scarcely long enough to recuperate my health. Not that I was wholly given to work, for I managed to squeeze into the weeks a good deal of pleasure. I was still young and glad, with keen interest in all the happenings about me, with hopes and dreams and resolves that lifted me to a higher plane, and filled me with aspirations. I am afraid that my work was sometimes badly done, because there was not time enough for all that I tried to do, and there was one matter in which I tried to be resolute—I did not often burn the midnight oil. I loved my work, but it did not so absolutely engross my heart and thought as to prevent me from living my own life; new interests and new friends brought sunshine into the darkest days, and I look back upon that as a good time.

Nevertheless, I was greatly pleased when Mr. Clarke proposed to me that I should give up school-teaching, and depend for a livelihood upon my pen. This was in 1867.

The first thing I did after being set free from teaching in school was to go to Hastings for a holiday. I

needed rest, and already had learned that nothing helped me so much in my writing, and gave me new ideas and subjects for thought, as change of scene. I loved the sea, and it always benefited me, physically and mentally ; perhaps I may also add spiritually.

When I returned from Hastings, at the close of my holiday, it was with the fixed determination to leave Northampton. "The land was all before me, where to choose." I could think of a dozen towns more interesting than "Leatherton"—Hastings, Plymouth, Dover, Canterbury, and some delightful villages, Farningham, Eynsford, Shoreham, Sevenoaks. It is a curious thing that I had no wish to go to London, where I have little doubt now that I ought to have gone, and where, during the last twenty years of my life, I have often wished to be. But London, as a place of residence, was not then what it is now. The noise of cities never commended itself to me, and though I have always loved people and been interested in them, my natural bent has been toward the country and a quiet life.

I thought I would not decide in a hurry as to my future residence, but in the end I remained at Northampton. My literary and journalistic friends said it was stupid of me, though I think they knew I was not so well fitted to be a townswoman as one of the country. Christopher Crayon spoke very disrespectfully of Northampton. "If I were you," he said, "I would live either in a town or a village—Northampton is neither the one nor the other!" My long residence there has no doubt cost me something. It would have been pleasant to be able to associate more with others doing the same work as

myself, but such institutions as writers' clubs were not dreamed of in the days when I made my decision. Northampton is a good place in which to live. It is bracing and healthy and clean. It is also less expensive than many towns, and people with moderate incomes might do much worse than come and reside in it. The making of boots and shoes is not dirty work, and it is not a smoky town. Moreover, and this has been a great convenience to me, it is a good centre. It is little more than sixty miles from London, and not as far from Leicester, Birmingham, Derby, Nottingham, Oxford, Cambridge, and other important places. I have always found it a good town from which to get away, and better now than it once was to come home to. It is well served, especially by my favourite railway, the London and North-Western, and I have been almost as good as a commercial traveller for taking journeys, north, south, east, and west.

I cannot say that I regret my decision to stay, and I think, perhaps, notwithstanding the huge workshops for the manufacture of boots and shoes, it may be called "the proud beauty of the Midlands."

But the spell which drew me into its heart, and kept me there, was my Bible class, of which I shall have more to say presently. And since then, and always, it has been the people more than the place, for they have given me in rich and kind abundance that which Drummond called "*The Greatest Thing in the World*"—Love.

As was only natural after my own experiences in elementary day schools, it was not the schools of Sunday

alone which interested me. I followed the passing of the Education Bill of 1870 with much solicitude. When the first School Board was formed in Northampton, a deputation from the Liberal party waited upon me to ask if I would consent to be nominated as a member. It will be remembered that then, as now, what was called the religious difficulty was very much in evidence, and some, at least, of the Radicals in our town were for having the Bible left out of the curriculum. The gentleman who called upon me, to my great surprise, was one of them, although a member of our church, and a devoted local preacher. He stated the views of those whom he represented, and I said that under no circumstances would I vote for religious instruction to be abolished. Under the British school system the scripture lessons were considered the most important of all, and I could not bear the thought of an infant school in which the little ones were taught nothing of Him who said, "Suffer the children to come unto Me, and forbid them not." Then my friend gave me to understand that the Liberal party would have none of me on the School Board.

Fifteen years later kindly pressure was brought to bear on me by some of the teachers of the town, more particularly the women. A lady had already served on the Board for several years, but she had not been able to continue, and for some years Northampton missed the advantage of having a woman member. The teachers thought that as I knew and trusted them, and as I could sometimes go into the schools and talk to the elder girls, I might render useful service, if I would

become a candidate at the next election. I took a little time to think it through, and to consult with the wisest man I knew in the town, my minister, the Rev. J. T. Brown, who strongly urged me to accede to the request of the teachers, and himself offered to nominate me. My difficulty was that as far as I knew the Radical members were in the same mind in regard to religious instruction as they had been at first, and as most of them were my personal friends, and as I was for the most part with them in my opinions, I scarcely liked to seem to go against them. But those who wanted the Bible excluded from the schools were never in the majority in Northampton, and as I thought I could spare a little time, I resolved to take an independent position, and, belonging to neither party, to take up the work if the town showed that it wished me to do so. I determined to have no canvassing, nor to address any public meetings, but to print a letter, and send it round to the voters.

I thought I did not care much which way the election went, but when the day came I found myself too excited to get the thought of it out of my mind. One or two friends called during the day to tell me that things were going on well for me. A few days before the same friend who had interviewed me fifteen years before sent me this message, "Tell Miss Hearn that unless she goes to the poll under the influence of our party she hasn't a chance." I thought I had, but did not feel at all sure of the result. In the evening, as I came away from our week-evening service, a friend met me. "The result of the election will not be declared until to-morrow,"

he said; "but it is certain that you will be in. Will you come to the Town Hall, and watch the counting for a few minutes with me?" I am always glad that I went, because it was my only chance of being present at such a function. Several of the gentlemen congratulated me in anticipation, which was comforting. The next morning news came to me that my Northampton friends had been many enough and kind enough to place me with a large majority at the head of the poll. The first time after this that I went into the town the kindly faces and greetings of my friends and neighbours were so expressive that I should have been more or less than human if I had not been conscious that a new blessing and opportuuity had come to me.

They were very pleasant years during which I had a seat on the Northampton School Board. I was not at all sure that all the members of the Board were glad to have me there—I fancy that most women who occupy public positions with men have the same doubt—but they were all courteous, and we worked together harmoniously. The greatest opposition I had was from one of the Labour members when I wished to introduce cooking-lessons into the schools. But as he was not supported, my resolution was carried, and he is now as pleased and proud as anybody with the girls' achievements in cookery.

For six years I remained on the School Board. There was no election at the end of the first three years, as nobody appeared to turn us out. I would like to have continued, but found that I could not spare the time, and the walk from my home to the Town Hall on winter

evenings seemed to grow longer and longer with each year. When the new and much-discussed Education Bill of 1902 changed the authority, the Town Council did me the honour to make me a co-opted member of the committee. But I was able to do so little, in comparison with what I felt a woman member ought to do, that I only kept the position for two years. I am very glad if I have been able to be of any service to teachers, because, in my opinion, they are the finest, most useful, and least appreciated class of persons in the kingdom.

CHAPTER VII

THE FIRST SUNDAY SCHOOL PAPER

VERY soon after the establishment of *The Christian World*, the idea of a journal devoted entirely to the interests of the Sunday school and of young people generally began to grow and expand in the brain of Mr. Whittemore. Sunday schools were doing magnificent work under serious difficulties, and Mr. Whittemore was resolved to help them. The Sunday School Union had not yet ventured on a journal of its own; there was therefore, a promising opportunity for the editor of *The Christian World* to supply a felt need. I had long talks with him on the subject before leaving Farningham. He gave me to understand that it was my opportunity, too, and asked me to become a contributor to the paper when it should be started. It was to be as much for the home as for the Sunday school, and several of us tried to find a good name for it. We decided that it must have the two names to indicate the character of the journal, and it was, therefore, called *The Sunday School Times and Home Educator*. The block which still heads the paper, and has now come to have a very ancient appearance indeed, was also the subject of much thought. The little pictures in the corners,

one representing a family group and the other a class in the Sunday school, with the mottoes around them, have become so well known in thousands of homes, that in any other dress the paper would lose some of its character. The originator was determined that the price should be only a halfpenny, though most of his friends thought it would mean ruin. It was, I believe, the first halfpenny paper on record, and it commended itself to Sunday school teachers as being within the reach of the very poorest.

Mr. Whittemore's idea was to have something for every one in the columns of *The Sunday School Times.* Authors were engaged to contribute serial stories, ministers to write sermons to children and Sunday school addresses, and well-known men and women to contribute papers on family or educational subjects. Lesson-helps for teachers were scarcely to be found in any publication ; the International Lesson had not yet been thought of, but lessons on Bible subjects were, of course, given in Sunday schools, and many of those who gave them greatly needed help. I told Mr. Whittemore of my friend, Miss Gordge, and assured him that no one could write more excellent lessons than she. He said he would come down to Northampton and be introduced to her. He did so, and she undertook to write some lessons for the journal, and has been a contributor ever since, indeed there has scarcely been a week without one or two lessons and other articles from her pen. She is well known to present readers by her married name, Mrs. Euren. It was left open to me to write anything I wished, though the first thing asked of me was that

I would try to fit hymns to certain tunes which the editor was then publishing.

It was on Friday, January 6, 1860, that the first number of *The Sunday School Times and Home Educator* appeared, having been previously announced in *The Christian World.* On its first page was a portrait of Rev. John Angell James, and an article on "God's Heroes," by Emma Jane Worboise. "The Land and the Book," by Rev. W. Thompson, D.D., was commenced, also "Lectures for Little Ones on the 'Pilgrim's Progress.'" "Walks in the Temple, being Illustrations of Types of Jewish Worship," were begun. The first instalment of a serial by the author of "Golden Hills," called "Jessie Gordon, or a Sunday Scholar's Influence," also appeared. There were three Sunday school lessons, one by the author of "The Golden Year," and two by Miss Gordge, the author of "Sunday School Characteristics."

My contribution to the initial number was the first of a series of Sunday school sketches and a poem.

The following good business announcement was prominent in this number :—

"As an encouragement for its general adoption, the editors of *The Sunday School Times* have made arrangements, at a large outlay, for every subscriber for one year to be presented gratis with a copy of the second series of

"'DR. TODD'S LECTURES TO CHILDREN,'

a volume recently published at one shilling and one and six. Annual subscribers, therefore, of four and fourpence, paid in advance, through superintendents or others, who may order

eight copies, will be supplied free of postage, fifty-two weeks with *The Sunday School Times*, which, at the end of the year, will form a volume of four hundred folio pages of closely-printed matter, equal to four large octavo volumes, ordinarily sold at thirty shillings, and also with one of the most interesting and instructive series of Lectures to Children ever published."

The introduction of the paper to the Christian public had been prepared with elaborate care and forethought. Ministers and Sunday school superintendents throughout the land had been apprised of its coming. When it came it was at once felt by thousands to be a boon that had been worth waiting for. Wise suggestions were made as to its circulation. It was not so much through the booksellers as through friends, personally and intensely interested in Sunday school work, that it became known. The result of all the thought and skill expended on its publication was that it had a most enthusiastic reception. It received, indeed, an ovation. Alike in large cities and towns and in remote hamlets and villages, it was welcomed as a true friend. Perhaps the smaller Sunday schools regarded it even more affectionately than the large ones, arrangements being made for parcels to be sent to teachers or superintendents. From that day to this *The Sunday School Times* in the villages has been a real power.

During the very first year of its publication the circulation reached the extraordinary sale of twenty-five thousand copies. It was a pathetic coincidence that the originator died in that first year of the life of the journal in which he was so interested. The Sunday school teachers of England have never had a better friend than

Jonathan Whittemore, and the contributors to the paper, as well as thousands of readers in all parts of the country, sincerely mourned his loss. He had, however, given *The Sunday School Times* a good start, and those who came after him knew exactly on what lines he wished it to be developed.

The paper held its own and maintained its circulation through the years that followed, and was always acknowledged to be excellent value for its small cost. A glance through the numbers of the first ten years reveals the constant and rather prolific writer that I had become. In 1868 I was writing a series of "Sunday School Sketches," of "Sunday School Lyrics," and "Stories for the Children;" also during that year I wrote every week one of the papers on "Girlhood." As soon as they were finished a new series of papers on "Home Life" commenced, and ran for about a year, being followed by papers on "Boyhood."

In the number of *The Sunday School Times* for January 1, 1869, there was a portrait of myself, and a short sketch on the front page. The editor announced that it was there because—

"a considerable number of the readers of this paper and *The Christian World* had at various times requested the publishers to give them a wood-cut engraving of this lady, whose writings they have so long read with interest and profit. From the first number to the present, Marianne Farningham has been a weekly and never-failing writer in *The Sunday School Times*, as well as in *The Christian World*.

"Practical usefulness is the manifest aim of all Miss Farningham's writings, and we have reason to believe that

multitudes of young persons have had cause for devout thankfulness for having been brought under the influence of her words, and induced to listen to her wise counsels and tender appeals. It is not our present purpose to give any particulars of Marianne Farningham's life, nor, indeed, to do anything more than merely to say that the accompanying engraving has been executed simply with a view of gratifying a host of readers who wished for a glimpse of the face of one who for many years had been their instructor and friend."

Two years later the portrait of Mr. James Clarke, the editor of the *Sunday School Times*, *Christian World*, *Literary World*, and *Christian World Pulpit*, occupied the first page of the New Year number. It was accompanied by a character-sketch.

"Two years ago we gave on this page a wood engraving of the most constant and best-known contributor to our paper—Marianne Farningham. To-day, at the request of not a few readers, we venture to insert the likeness of the man who, for the past twelve years, has been the editor of *The Sunday School Times*, and for fifteen years and more the editor of *The Christian World*. Mr. Clarke was closely identified with both these journals from their very birth; and, with the exception of some eighteen months in their early history, has had the entire literary control of both alike. Owing to causes which readers of these periodicals for any length of time may be able to understand without explanation, no considerable period elapsed before the public gave them a large circulation, and not only gave, but sustained, and that with an ever widening field of influence and usefulness. It will probably be scarcely less gratifying to the supporters of *The Christian World* and of *The Sunday School Times*, than it is to their editor, to know that the demand for both the papers is at this moment greater, by thousands every week, than ever before in their history. It is a low estimate

to say that, combined, the readers of these journals number half a million of people.

"It may be helpful to some young man or woman who may read these lines to be told that Mr. Clarke attributes his success in these and all other undertakings, under the guiding hand of Divine Providence, first, to a clear perception of what he sought to attain, and then to persistent efforts to attain it. In his case it may be said, as in the case of many others, 'The child was father to the man'; for, from the earliest age, when at home in a sleepy Essex village in his father's house, he longed for books and magazines, when few or none were to be had, except the Bible, the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' Watts's and Wesley's Hymns, Cole on the 'Divine Sovereignty,' and *The Child's Companion*. Indeed, even this single periodical, it is believed, had never found its way to that locality till he himself became a subscriber for a copy each month, and which he induced all the boys and girls of the place he could influence to come together and hear read, when the slow 'number-man' arrived weeks after the date of the anxiously expected magazine. *The Youth's Magazine* and *The Visitor* followed in process of time, and a few others as money could be spared; while the loan of a volume of the once famous and really excellent *Penny Magazine* of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge was a treasure highly prized and never to be forgotten.

"In process of time, when the work of the world had to be begun, and town life entered upon, Mr. Clarke remembers few things more vividly than the pleasure with which he entered upon the self-imposed task of getting subscribers to a list of periodicals, and of delivering them each month as the parcel came in by the stage-coach, which was often waited up for till past midnight to gratify the desire of an early sight of the charming new magazines. Various circumstances served but to foster this early taste, the acceptance of certain fugitive pieces of his own by two or three periodicals being, perhaps, not

among the least potent. The consequence was that, after a few years of journalistic apprenticeship in London, he required no strong persuasions to induce him to associate with others in the publication of *The Christian World*, one of the very first of the penny journals. . . . *The Sunday School Times* was only a few years after *The World*, and though it was predicted that a halfpenny paper could never pay, it was, in fact, a success from the very first number, and a precursor of many other halfpenny periodicals. Then came a sixpenny monthly, *The Christian World Magazine*, soon followed by *The Literary World*—giving a full account of all the new books of the day, and last, for the present, *The Christian World Pulpit*, the cheapest pennyworth of sermon literature ever before attempted. It is with the most profound thankfulness and gratitude that Mr. Clarke is able to say that in every one of these attempts to supply a cheap, wholesome literature for the people he has succeeded even beyond his most sanguine expectations. The Christian public evidently wanted what he was led to provide for them, and if life and health be spared he hopes to see greater things in relation to our periodical literature than has yet been realized. Meanwhile his thanks, and the thanks of all his associates, are felt to be justly due, and are hereby given, with no grudging spirit, to every reader whose co-operation has brought about these results which have led to this brief statement of the rise and growth of *The Sunday School Times*, and its four healthy sisters of 13, Fleet Street."

From the first *The Sunday School Times* began the year with a portrait and sketch of some worker for the young. Between those of Marianne Farningham and Mr. Clarke was placed Mr. Daniel Pratt, chairman of the Sunday School Union, a devoted member of the Union committee for twenty-seven years.

In 1874 Mrs. Raymond Pitman's face looked upon

her readers, and her interesting serial story, "Life's Daily Ministry," ran through that year.

In 1875 the subject was the Rev. Llewelyn D. Bevan, LL.B., who was at that time writing for *The Sunday School Times* a series of suggestive studies of the history of Jesus, in the order of the Gospels, under the title of "Lessons from the Life."

In 1876 a worker still living, and now the oldest secretary of the Sunday School Union, and always the chairman of its publication committee, Mr. William Howse Groser, occupied the first page. He edited two of the magazines which in my youth were most helpful to me, *The Bible Class Magazine* and *The Youth's Companion.*

Following Mr. Groser in the *Sunday School Times* portrait gallery was another member of the Union committee, Mr. Fountain John Hartley. This was in 1877, when the International Bible Lesson System had lately been introduced; the European section was represented by him and his friend, Mr. Groser. He himself had written two useful booklets on "Sunday School Statistics" and "Pictorial Teaching."

In 1878 the portrait was that of Sir Charles Reed, the first chairman of the London School Board, and chairman and president of the Sunday School Union—a fine man in every way, who should never be forgotten, who did more for education in this country than almost any other man. In 1841 appeared his "Infant Class in the Sunday School," for which he obtained the first prize in a public competition. In 1855 he published a plea for the establishment of Free Libraries, entitled

'Why Not?" and thus rendered an immense service to the country.

A lady occupied the first place in 1879, Mrs. Woodward, who had published several popular stories, and whose serials, "Ethel Leslie's Temptation," and "Ella Dawson's Difficulties," appeared in *The Sunday School Times* during the year.

In 1880 our friend "Christopher Crayon," Mr. James Ewing Ritchie, occupied the page of honour. All readers of *The Sunday School Times*, and especially of *The Christian World* knew and loved him for his racy articles, his vigorous and graphic descriptions of men and places, which made him ever a favourite.

These and those whose portraits followed were all our friends, and used their influence on behalf of our paper.

I was myself writing for it with all my might, and my rhymes are a surprise to myself as I turn over the old records. In the number for January 3, 1879, is my thousandth contribution in verse to *The Sunday School Times*. Perhaps, on account of its number, I may be pardoned for reproducing it here.

"What shall I wish you, my children?
Over the frozen snow
A stranger is coming to you
Whose face you do not know;
But you haste to give him welcome,
With the ringing of the bells;
Though what are the gifts he brings you
The stranger never tells.

"What shall I wish you, my children?
First that the Guest may bring
Blessings of peace and plenty,
(For he comes from a gracious King),

That his hands may be full of treasures,
And that you may none of them miss,
That the days may be passed in sunshine,—
Say, shall I wish you this?

"Yes, but there's something better
Than flowers and light and song,
A treasure that never fadeth,
A blessing that lingers long,
A Friend who will go beside you
Whenever the light is dim,
So whatever the day has hidden,
I hope you will walk with Him.

"And chiefly I wish you, children,
The love of this gracious Friend,
For that is the treasure that lasteth,
And the blessing that has no end,
And you know it is yours already,
So turn not your hearts away,
But give Him your trust for ever,
And love him this New Year's Day.

"And I wish that the year in passing
May render you glad and wise,
With a hope that is fixed on Jesus,
And a home that is in the skies;
May it make you strong and useful,
And a blessing to all around;
And aye, in the paths of goodness,
May the children I love be found.

"And then I know that your spirits
Will be glad in the bright new year,
And the peace of the great All-Father
Shall quiet each rising fear;
And gently His hand shall lead you,
And fondly His heart shall love,
Oh! children give praise for ever
To the God who is King above."

CHAPTER VIII

MY BIBLE CLASS

I HAD not associated myself with a Sunday school while I was all the week engaged in teaching, but it was ever my intention to resume the work in which at Eynsford, Bristol, and Gravesend, I had been deeply interested. A few days after my return from Hastings, a lady called to ask if I would take her class, as in consequence of failing health she felt compelled to relinquish it. I told her that I was not remaining in Northampton, and therefore it would not be possible for me to fill the vacant place. She said there were many friends who hoped I should remain, and begged me to reconsider the question. She informed me that the class was composed of fifteen or sixteen girls, whose ages were from sixteen to twenty. She thought that I should be interested in them, and able to help them. But I declined, assuring her that my mind was made up to leave the town. The next day the superintendent came to talk to me, Mr. William Gray. He was more urgent even than Miss Shrewsbury had been. He was sure it was my duty to step into this gap, and he would not leave until I had promised to take the class while I remained in the town. I said it would be no use, as

I did not expect to be there more than three months. But he replied that the class would be altogether without a teacher unless I would undertake it, and that by the end of three months they would perhaps be able to find some one else.

On the next Sunday afternoon a member of the class, who had been one of my pupil teachers, took me down to College Street and introduced me to the girls. This was before the time of the International Lessons, so I chose my own, the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem. I did not take trouble to specially prepare it, thinking that I knew enough to give a lesson on the subject. But when I looked at these young women, my heart misgave me. They received me kindly enough, though, as was natural, they were feeling very real regret at losing the teacher who had loved them for many years. The class was held in the chapel, in the corner of one of the galleries. The girls sat on two seats at right angles, and a chair was placed for me in front of them. Scarcely ever have I experienced such deep humiliation as during that afternoon. One of the girls knew much more about the lesson than I did. She contradicted me several times, she put questions to me which I could not answer, and smiled scornfully while I deduced the lessons from the narrative for the benefit of the class. It was one of the longest and worst hours of my life. I slipped away as quickly as possible at the close, alone, feeling that nothing should induce me to face the ordeal again. I reached home with a violent headache, thoroughly miserable, and spent the evening full of shame and remorse. But the next morning something in me

revolted. I hated to be beaten. It was a shameful thing if I, lately the head-mistress of a school, and a life-long student of the Bible, could not give a lesson to a class of girls! Most of them I knew worked in the shoe-factories, but my doughty combatant was a servant. They were all, however, very intelligent and bright young persons, and I knew myself well enough to be sure that it was possible to get much pleasure by talking to them about the things I loved most. So I resolved to try again next Sunday, but to be very especially careful to have my lesson thoroughly well prepared.

When I met the class again I was ready to answer questions, and the girls were ready to receive me very kindly. I knew that I had to win my way with them. It was no case of love at first sight. But I did not despair of making them my friends, and, indeed, was resolved to do it. I confessed my shame at last Sunday's failure, and I think the girls liked me the better for that.

The three months passed quickly away, and at the end of them I was no nearer to a decision in regard to my next place of abode, though I still meant to remove. My class had brought a new interest into my life. The sort of study I was obliged to give to the lessons was a pleasure, and the companionship of the girls became a real joy to me. I gave them much time. Except to the week-night services I seldom went out in the evenings, that I might be at home to them. The class rapidly grew in numbers, and this gave me more to do, but the doing was delightful. The confidences of my girls were very precious to me. I was often amazed at their

clearness of thought, their fresh insight, and the high aims that inspired them. Some of them were living very beautiful lives at home. It was no unusual thing for them to be earning not only their own living but also a good part of that of the family ; to work all day in the factories, and do the house cleaning in between. I could tell some interesting stories of them.

Of course, now that I was not teaching every day I had more time for writing, and my class helped me to a good many ideas. It was to them I owed the series of articles written expressly for elder daughters and senior scholars, under the general title of "Girlhood." These were put into a volume, and I had the great happiness of presenting a copy to each member of my class. "Girlhood" proved by far my most successful book. In 1869 it had reached the fourth edition. Mothers and fathers bought it for their girls, many of whom have now become mothers themselves, and are still buying it for their daughters. A new and revised edition, making the twenty-fifth thousand was published in 1895.

It was good for me to be in the midst of so much young life. I am sure that I wrote my verses all the better, because I knew my girls would read, and many would learn them. I was often congratulated upon my constituency of readers. "Are you not proud," said a gentleman to me once, "that probably two hundred thousand people read your writings every week?" I was almost stunned ; to me that was too great a thought! I was certainly very proud to be connected with *The Christian World*, but large numbers are vague things,

and such figures frightened me. Happily human nature is much the same everywhere. Sorrow and difficulty, joy and pleasure, active days and peaceful nights are for all. No writer can express more than he himself sees and feels, and to be brought into close sympathy with, say, a hundred average persons was a great help to me, as it would have been to any one, whose life work was to see and feel and express.

In 1871 my sister, with her husband and family, came to settle in Northampton. I lived with them, and had the advantage of a delightfully large sitting-room. It was a pleasant room in which to write, and the work of some of my busiest years was done in it. Certainly this was the most formative period of my class. We held there some week-evening meetings, which neither they nor I can forget. My sister's room was a sanctuary consecrated by the prayers of the girls. I am to-day filled with joy, as I often was then, at the memory of those first prayers of young Christians, which were touchingly beautiful. My heart is full of unspeakable gratitude for the number of girls who gave themselves to Jesus at this time, and who are to-day in many places and circumstances living the Christ life.

It was in the spring of 1867 that I was persuaded to take this class. In 1882 there was published in *The Sunday School Times* a picture of the class and the teacher, the latter looking like a poor widow with a huge family, and very sad about it. It was supplemented by the following article. I am sorry to have forgotten who wrote it—if I ever knew—but it gives, better than I could myself, so much information that

perhaps it may be inserted here, though I am afraid it is very egotistical to do it.

"MARIANNE FARNINGHAM'S CLASS.

"Keeping the promise made in our last number, when giving the portraits of Marianne Farningham and a section of her class, we now proceed to dwell at greater length upon this labour of love. The class of young women conducted by our esteemed contributor, Marianne Farningham, numbers some 180 or 200 young women in all. Its beginnings were but small. It originally comprised a class of some sixteen senior girls, whose teacher was compelled to give up through ill-health. Marianne Farningham was asked to take it. Her experience having up to that time been confined to infant classes, she gave a decided negative to the request. Pressure from the superintendent seemingly failed, but, after some hesitancy, she agreed to take the class, until another, as she thought, more suitable person could be found. Happily, the 'more suitable' person never was found. The Lord had already blessed her pen to many a sorrowing, despondent soul, had, through her bright and glowing poetry, cheered and brightened many a Christian life, and now He was to fashion her for another work. With her own characteristic modesty, under the veil of semi-anonymity, she has described her own feelings the first Sunday she began her work in this, to her, new department in the Master's Vineyard. 'The first Sunday,' she says, 'was a memorable one to the teacher.' She was a very little woman, and exceedingly nervous, while some of the girls were tall, and evidently ready to 'quiz.' The impression left on her mind was that she had failed; and she says, 'It may well be imagined that the teacher, covered with shame and humiliation, hastened home to find solace in tears.' If it were a failure, it was a blessed failure, for it was the beginning of a work which has again and again received the Divine approval in the happiest

results. Her first thoughts were of relinquishment, but better ones prevailed; and in the strength of Christ, and with more careful preparations, she again proceeded to her task. The second Sunday was happier; and so with increasing experience, and a profounder sense of the nearness of the Master, the work became ultimately a great happiness, though not untinged with an occasional sense of failure and disappointment. The work grew upon her, until it became what all true-hearted Sunday school work must become: an earnest yearning for the salvation of her scholars, an intense hungering for souls. She was not satisfied with the single Sunday lesson, she sought to make the acquaintance of her girls in everyday life, and this developed into a regular weekly meeting. Established first as a prayer-meeting, in which the young women sought communion with the Master in the encouraging, strengthening atmosphere of Divine fellowship, it ultimately assumed a more elastic character. Religious experiences were interchanged, Bible readings were given, and conversational discussions took place on the application of Christian principles to everyday life; for instance: 'What Amusements are Proper for Christian Girls?' 'What Obligations attend Church Membership?' How far should Christian Girls follow the Fashions in Dress?' 'Is it ever right for Christian Girls to marry Men who are Upright and Moral, but not Christians?' It is easy to see how helpful these things would be to the young women, and what a lofty tone would be imparted to their daily life. Miss Farningham feels that 'the success which has attended her labours is almost entirely due to the intercourse which she has held with the girls *during the week*, since it was in that way that close friendships were formed and impressions made.'

"The class is part of the Sunday school organizations in connection with the College Street Baptist Church, Northampton, of which the Rev. John Turland Brown, one of the ex-presidents of the Baptist Union, is pastor. Year after year

it contributes its quota to the roll of Church members. The large staff of teachers engaged at College Street is constantly recruited from its ranks. The numbers fluctuate slightly, for there are removals by death, girls leave the town, or get married. Nevertheless, the vacancies are filled, and the numbers are substantially maintained.

"A peculiarity of the class is that it is not confined to one section of the religious community. It contains young women belonging to every section of the Protestant Church of Christ, from the Established Church of England to the Unitarian Christian Church. They come, too, from various classes, and are engaged in all sorts of occupations. The majority of the girls work in the shoe-factories of Northampton, but there are also pupil teachers, assistant mistresses in board schools, artists, music teachers, drapers' assistants, milliners, etc., and perhaps half a dozen servants. The most varied tastes and the most varied pursuits are represented. Whatever community, whatever class they belong to, or whatever their occupation, they are all equally welcome. They all feel they have in their teacher a loving friend, a wise counsellor, one who never ceases to think of them, care for them, and would do anything in her power to promote their temporal and eternal welfare. It is her joy to make her girls happy; and a tender love and a deeply sympathetic nature are prime elements in her success as she 'allures to brighter worlds and leads the way.' She knows how to rejoice with them in their joys, and to weep with them when they weep. At their weddings she is ever a welcome guest, and in the hour of sickness or of death she is there to comfort and to bless. They are able to feel, too, that her house is in a sense theirs too. A week or two since—it was on December 17—a hundred of them met at her house to celebrate her birthday, and a glorious time it was. They never forget her birthday; it is an occasion when she always receives loving mementoes from them. Those 'at homes,'

too, held week by week, year after year, have been happy experiences of home life, sanctified by the purest Christian joys.

"Although her many lecturing engagements during the winter season make it oftentimes inconvenient to get home for the Sunday class, it must be a long distance which will keep Miss Farningham away. Her absence is as great a disappointment to herself as it is to 'her girls,' and it is not easy to find a substitute for so peculiarly powerful a ministry. It is one of the hopes of the future that the friends at College Street will be able to erect a class-room or lecture-room worthy of the class."

This most kind and flattering appreciation omits several details and incidents which may be mentioned. There was one very sad year in our town, when for several months there was a terrible strike and lock-out among the shoe-factories. Many of my girls, who had no part in the struggle, suffered from it very greatly. No new dresses were bought that year, no holidays taken, and though the girls were very brave, one could see from their faces and general appearance how hard it was to live. My heart ached as I stood before them on Sundays, and tried to give the lessons as usual. One day a few of the girls in happier circumstances called to see me about it. "We have been thinking," said the spokeswoman of the little party, "that perhaps we might lend our girls who are out of work some money to tide them over this bad time. They look so thin and sad that we cannot bear to see them. We know they would not take money as a gift, and some of them are too independent to be asked many times to dinner, but you may be able to persuade them to accept a

loan." "I will try," said I; "it is a very happy thought of yours." The next morning, before I had left my room, a little packet containing twenty sovereigns was brought to me. On Sunday I spoke about it in the class, and begged the girls who were affected by the strike to avail themselves of this proof of the love of their class-mates, and asked them to call on me for a loan next day. Nobody came, either then or during the week. On the following Sunday I begged them not to be too proud to use a little of this money. "It is just the same as if your own sister lent it," I said; "and none but you and I will know who has it. You can return it when the strike is over, and nobody be any the wiser." But there was no response from these fifty high-spirited and independent young women, who looked paler and thinner than ever. I have admired them since, but I felt rather vexed with them at the time. One girl especially, whose circumstances I knew, troubled me, and I appealed personally to her. "No, thank you, Miss Hearn. It is very kind of those girls, whoever they may be, but I would rather not take the money. I had a little in the savings-bank, and I think I can hold on." "Now, Annie," I said impatiently, "don't be stupid. You *shall* take it," and I forced a sovereign into her hand, which she repaid directly she was at work again. Eventually two others had a sovereign each, one was a married woman whose husband was out of work, and the other a girl who had a widowed mother to keep as well as herself.

When the girls were again in full work we established a Thrift Society. A gentleman offered to give

us five per cent. on the money. We put it to the girls that I, and one of their number, whom we knew to be a very well-off person, would be guarantors, and then we appointed a treasurer and secretary, and a time for the money to be deposited. A good beginning was made, and I, being exceedingly busy, banished the subject from my mind. After some months the secretary asked me if I knew how much had been paid in, and I was surprised to hear that it amounted to several hundred pounds. Later still the gentleman who received the money told me he could not go on paying five per cent., for the sum was now over a thousand. So I had to look into it. I found that only a comparatively small number of girls belonged to the Thrift Society, but some of them had taken their money from the savings-banks, naturally taking advantage of the higher interest offered. We made a rule that no girl should have more than twenty pounds in our society, but our banker declined to take charge of the money any longer. What was to be done with it? I did not know. It is very little, alas! that I have ever known or understood about money. I went to London to consult Mr. Tresidder, who had a large class of young men, and also talked over the matter with Mr. Bramwell, who knew all about temperance, thrift, and other societies. In the end, however, we had to give up our own. The girls who had saved large sums joined building societies, and several of them—girls no longer—are living in their own houses.

For a long time we had a collection once a month to create a fund to enable us to make a little present to

any of our number who might be sick and poor. The gift was never less than half a sovereign. I shall not forget taking it to one girl. "Why," she said, with radiant face, "it is like a week's wages!"

Also we had for some time a furnished cottage in the country, to which the girls could go for week-ends, or when they needed rest, quiet, and fresh air.

For a good many years we had an annual holiday together, for as many as could afford it. It came about in this way. I was in North Wales, when I met our superintendent, Mr. Parker Gray. "Don't you wish your young people could see this?" he asked. Indeed I did! and as I said the words the idea flashed into my mind that perhaps it would not be impossible. So on my return I talked to the girls about it, and asked them if they would care to put by a shilling a week during the year for the purpose. Some of them were very pleased. They thought the shillings would be safer if they gave them into the keeping of another, and we appointed to the office Miss Lacey, the sister of Mrs. James Hirst Hollowell, who also was one of my girls. When winter came and the snow was on the ground, I believe some had their shillings back, but when next summer came we were able to make up our first party. I cannot remember the number, but think we were about fifteen. We had a very good time. Some of the girls had never seen the sea—holidays were not so easy and common then as now—and they were delightfully, beautifully happy. To my mind their faces were the loveliest sights in Hastings that year. Of course we had singing and prayer together, and read some verses

from the Book which we all loved. "What made you first want to be a Christian?" I asked a girl who afterwards wished to join the Church. "It was at Hastings," she said, "when I saw how kind and sweet and glad Christian girls could be."

I think we must have had about twenty of these holidays together. We went to Brighton, Ventnor, Llandudno, Ramsgate, Douglas, Edinburgh, and several times to Barmouth. The largest party I ever conducted was between seventy and eighty, when the London and North Western Railway Company, with the Cambrian, gave us tickets at half-tourist fares, twelve shillings and sixpence for ten days, and a Barmouth friend fed and housed us for sixteen shillings. Everybody was good to us, and because of our numbers coach-rides and steamer trips were possible to all. I was always the happiest of the band. Very little of the burden or responsibility fell on me, for I had such a splendid committee of helpers among my girls. God bless them!

It was in 1887 that the College Street friends and others gave us a class-room. It had been rather difficult to get it. Some of the moneyed friends did not altogether sympathize with my methods, and the class was too large to please everybody. It was augmented mostly from the outside, though one other class, on the resignation of the teacher, was allowed to join us. But we had many staunch, good friends. Our minister, Mr. Brown, was ever kind and sympathetic, as were most of the deacons, especially Mr. Thomas Pressland, who was always my friend, and who instituted

a plan for getting donations under the heading of "Miss Hearn's Sovereign Friends." The girls themselves collected more than a hundred pounds towards the building fund, and we partly furnished the room ourselves. It was very nicely furnished, with chairs instead of benches, and a carpet instead of bare boards; and in due time we put into it a piano and an organ. Mr. Edward Crossley of Halifax, kindly presented us with a carpet from his manufactory; but the greater part of the money for our furnishing came in a delightful way. By the courtesy of our good friend, the editor, a plea for help was inserted in *The Christian World*. The response was astonishing. Kind letters containing money came to me in a veritable shower, and in a week or two I received sixty pounds, which enabled us to enjoy the comforts and luxuries of our room, free of debt. Later we had a library, for which we were chiefly indebted to the generous kindness of Mr. Clarke, who gave us all the books of Emma Jane Worboise, and many others. He also inserted in *The Christian World* a request for gifts of books, asking friends "not to send any sort of rubbish, nor too many theological volumes, but pleasant, readable, instructive books, suitable for the reading of intelligent young people." The first to respond were Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton, who sent a handsome contribution of excellent books. So did the Religious Tract Society, Messrs. Nelson & Sons, the Sunday School Union, and others.

The public opening of the class-room was a grand occasion, and Christopher Crayon came down to describe it for *The Christian World*, and to speak at the meeting.

AN END OF OUR CLASS ROOM.

The Rev. J. T. Brown presided, and never was president more genial, warm-hearted, and eloquent. Several ministers of the town showed their sympathy and appreciation by their presence. Christopher Crayon gave us one of his typical addresses, full of wit, humour, and good sense.

The first meeting, however, held in the new room was before the formal opening. It was a prayer-meeting held by the girls themselves, and I think this was its real consecration.

* * * * *

I read this chapter to one who was for a long time a member of my Bible class. "This is not enough; it tells too little," she said. She wrote the following tribute; and I add it, although I think it is full of love's exaggerations, because I know it will please many of my old girls, who may probably read this autobiography.

A TRIBUTE FROM ONE OF THE CLASS

"It was in May of the year 1874, and when I had just joined the Church, that one of my girl-friends invited me to go with her to Miss Hearn's week-evening Bible class. I said, 'Thank you; I should love to go.' Miss Hearn was no stranger to me, for when I was a child of three my mother took me to the infant school of which she was the mistress, and my love for her began then. When I was removed to the girls' department I no longer called her 'Governess,' but the sight of her as she daily went through the street where my home was on her way to school, always sent

a thrill of gladness through my childish heart, though I am not sure that she recognized me.

"Miss Hearn's week-evening class was held in her own sitting-room, a large room on the first floor of her sister's house. When my friend and I got to the top of the staircase leading to the room, the 'little teacher,' as she was often lovingly called, was standing ready to receive her girls. I remember that she wore a grey dress which matched her curls (her hair was grey when she was still quite young) and that her hair was held in place by a band of ribbon velvet ; a lace collar fastened by a brooch was her only adornment. I was a little shy, but when she looked at me and said with the love in her voice and eyes which drew everybody to her, 'Why, it's A. B.,' and took my hand in hers, I was happy at once. I was taken to her bedroom to remove my hat as if I had been an invited guest, and, since, I have thought what work somebody must have had to put that bedroom and sitting-room right every week after such a large party! But Miss Hearn's sister was second only to our teacher in her kindness to us.

"That night there must have been at least sixty present—sometimes there were as many as eighty. The girls sat on chairs, couch, hassocks, floor—every place where they could accommodate themselves. We had a prayer-meeting in the twilight and ten girls prayed. Simple, earnest, wonderful prayers they were, which stirred me to the very depths and made me long to live a more entirely consecrated life. I don't remember what hymns we sang, but no doubt 'At even, ere the sun was set.' 'How sweet the name of

Jesus sounds,' and 'Lord, a little child of Thine!' were among them; for these were favourites which we sang many times and in all sorts of places.

"They were golden days for me which followed that first meeting. I was there every Tuesday, and whether we had a Bible lesson, or a 'Conversation' meeting, or read 'The Pilgrim's Progress,' I always went home with a renewed determination to live nearer my Saviour. I don't know how long the class had been formed when I joined it, but some of those who had been longest in it were Christian young women of the highest type. One came from a draper's establishment, and brought ten in her train, and another brought six or seven. Some were workers in shoe-factories, and most had such refined faces and gentle ways that only the grace of God can give. Many had pocket editions of the Gospel of St. John—'little John's' they called them—with which they began, continued, and ended their days of work. And how merry they were! There was a little inner circle of girls who used to stay behind and chat with their teacher after the others had gone, and though perhaps that same teacher had hours of reading and writing to do before she could go to bed, she never seemed hurried, and was always ready to be amused or sympathetic, only—she liked them to be at home by ten o'clock. It was this little inner circle of girls who used to hold special meetings for prayer whenever trouble or sickness visited any member of the class, or any one dear to our teacher, and always we were sure that our prayers were heard, by the blessings which followed them.

"I had a class of my own on Sundays, and so missed the privilege of hearing Miss Hearn's Bible lessons, but there were often special occasions when I was in her company. It was when the races gave many of us a holiday that she took us into the woods, and I saw primroses growing for the first time. Then there were excursions into a pine-wood on summer Saturday afternoons. One winter there were several little parties to which Miss Hearn invited batches of girls who worked together, or were especially friendly. Then the house was ransacked to provide dresses and things for charades and other games. There were, too, the birthday parties on December 17th, to which old girls were invited, and which every year grew bigger. When Miss Hearn, in after years, took a good-sized house, two sitting-rooms, study, and kitchen overflowed with guests, and later still, when we had a large room of our own attached to College Street chapel, it and the large schoolroom were required to accommodate those who came. At all these times we brimmed over with happiness and mirth, yet we always went away uplifted.

"If we were in any difficulty or trouble, and needed advice or comfort, our teacher was at home on Saturday afternoons always, and if our difficulties and troubles were not all removed, the love which was given us without stint made us strong to meet them.

"I think it was because Miss Hearn so believed in girls, and always saw their good side, that they were encouraged to be their best selves. At the same time they all knew she expected them to be upright, true, and generous. When any of our number left the town she

tried to keep in touch with them by letters, though with so much literary work this was not easy. For years, however, she wrote a separate New Year's letter to every member of the class; but the strain of writing a hundred different letters proved at last too much, and then a printed message to all took their place.

"Another bond by which we were held to our friend was her expressed need of us. 'Pray for me,' she often said, and we did, and some of us, perhaps many, pray for her still.

"It was not until I had reached womanhood that I was able to join in the holiday by the sea which for several years Miss Hearn arranged for those who could afford the small sum necessary. I think there were fifteen in the first party I joined, and we were like a big happy family. There was no restraint, we were trusted to behave as Christian young women should; delightful outings were planned for us, and all sorts of amusing incidents, that I have not time to relate, occurred to us. It was in the Isle of Man, and when Miss Hearn must have been still on the sunny side of fifty, that we went in search of osmunda ferns. We found them growing in an enclosed field, and an old man offered to dig some up for us. Their big roots, and the soil upon them, made them heavy, and when our teacher was about to shoulder one the old man said, 'Let the young 'uns carry 'em, ma'am; you baint as young as you used to be.' 'No,' said she; 'how old do you think I am?' 'Be you seventy?' said he; 'I'm seventy.'

"When we paid our first visit to Barmouth, Miss Hearn went to inquire the cost of weekly tickets to

enable us to cross the toll-bridge over the estuary. Half a crown was the price named. 'Dear me!' said our leader. 'Then what shall I do with my seventeen?' 'Have you got seventeen?' said the official, looking sympathetically at the little grey-haired woman in front of him.

"There were several holiday parties at Barmouth, which we grew to love more and more after it became a kind of second home to our teacher. The last party went in 1896, and a few years later Miss Hearn felt it necessary to give up the class to which she had devoted so much love and strength and time. Of the hundreds who had belonged to it, some have been called to higher service, many have already passed their jubilee, and are mothers of daughters, to whom they talk with never-ceasing affection of the friend and teacher who was an inspiration to them in the days of their girlhood, and some are trying to help girls not their own, as they themselves were helped."

CHAPTER IX

NEW WORK

IN 1876 a gentleman, Mr. McAllum, wrote to me from Newcastle-on-Tyne, asking if I would write a book on Grace Darling. The idea pleased me greatly. I had never attempted biography, and this would bring me a change of work. Naturally, the brave girl of the North had appealed to my imagination, and the Farne Isles, Bamborough Castle, and the great North Sea, though as yet I had not beheld them, had often called to me. To write a book about them was another thing, however. I found that he wished me to write under my *nom de plume*, and I felt that I could not do so with honour, as it belonged by right to *The Christian World* and the firm of Messrs. James Clarke & Co. Moreover, I could not make a book out of the little I knew about Grace Darling.

Mr. McAllum replied that he had plenty of material which he would send me, and he offered me a good price for that which I knew would prove pleasant work. Also, though reluctantly, he agreed that I should write under another name. We had some discussion on this point, and in the end selected about the weakest we could have found—"Eva Hope"—with the understanding that

subsequent books I might write for the publishers (Adam & Co., of Gateshead) should appear as "By the Author of 'Grace Darling.'"

The heroine of the Farne Isles was a delightful person with whom to make closer acquaintance. Letters and newspaper cuttings helped me to know and understand her. A relative—an aunt, I think—gave me a lock of Grace Darling's hair, and some particulars of her family reached me, so that I had a most enjoyable time while writing my first biography. The book had a very large sale, both at the time and afterwards. At the Fisheries Exhibition, when, if I remember rightly, the boat was on view in which Grace and her father went out to do the doughty deed, large numbers of my book were sold.

I was next invited to write a volume on David Livingstone, and some books on Africa, already published by Messrs. Adam & Co., were sent me. The brave hero was on people's hearts and in their minds at this time, and everything about him was eagerly read. It was not so very long since his body was buried in Westminster Abbey, and people had not ceased talking of the time of anxiety when it was not known whether he was dead or alive, and Stanley courageously obeyed the terse behest of *The New York Herald*, "Go and find Livingstone."

The next biography was "Our Queen," and in this my niece collaborated with me, so that afterwards the volumes were "By the Authors of 'Our Queen.'" Always I had an affectionate regard for good Queen Victoria, and it was pleasant to us to go over the

incidents of her life, and write them in simple form, so that the volume might be suitable for school prizes. It and those which followed were much used in connection with the "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon," which was soon after inaugurated.

"Is Gordon Safe?" This was the title of some verses which I wrote for *The Christian World* when the country was full of suspense concerning that brave and lonely man who went forth at the bidding of the Government to Khartum, undeterred by fear of violence or death. The verses brought me a letter of thanks from the sister of General Gordon, who offered to lend me some of his diaries and other writings. I had been already asked to write for our series the life of General Gordon, and this opened the way, and lent additional interest to the work. I had heard of Gordon's work among the boys at Gravesend, and had read of his marvellous achievements in China, so that I was not quite unprepared for this work.

"New World Heroes," which contained biographical sketches of Lincoln and Garfield, made another volume; and yet another bore the title of "Queens of Literature," in which were appreciations of Harriet Martineau, Charlotte Bronte, and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, with others.

For the most part, these books were written in the reading-room of the British Museum, so that I might avail myself of books of reference as I required them. My experience there was very happy, the reading-room being a charming place in which to work. It made me feel that I had some small part with the great

company of literary men and women whose names I knew, and whose faces I occasionally saw bending over the books they were studying. This work at the Museum necessitated an occasional residence in London; and this was delightful, because I knew London very little, and I had now the first opportunity of my life to visit some of its interesting sights, and to watch, as far as I could, the people and their doings in the metropolis. The Museum work was not a great mental strain, for subject and material were ready to my hand, and I had only to select facts and describe them in my own language. The later volumes were published by the firm of Walter Scott, from whom I ever received kind and generous treatment. Altogether, therefore, this work formed a very pleasant interlude, and my sister was with me in London as often as was possible.

I was naturally most anxious that the writing of these books should in no way interfere with my permanent work for Messrs. James Clarke & Co., and I do not think it did. My contributions were at the same time appearing in all their papers, and although no doubt I was, then and always, doing too much to do it well, that which I did at the time seems to me not worse, nor much less, than usual.

As I look back upon my work during those busy years I am amazed at its quantity. In *The Christian World*, besides a set of verses, and a prose article on some general subject, I was writing every week something for the children, such as "Chats by the Sea," "Talks in the Country," and "Short Stories." In *The Sunday School Times* I was afraid the readers would

have too much of Marianne Farningham, and omitted the name from some of my productions. I wrote several serial stories for children which were published in *The Christian World Magazine*, and some small things for *Happy Hours*, which journal was afterwards absorbed in *The Family Circle*.

One year I was feeling very unhappy on the subject of capital punishment. Something had occurred, I do not exactly remember what, but I believe it was the execution of a man who was afterwards proved innocent. It so took possession of me that I went away into the country and wrote a story which I hoped would do a little toward influencing public opinion on behalf of the abolition of the death penalty; a vain hope, unhappily since it still remains in force. It was in the springtime, and most of the story was written out-of-doors, a pleasant condition for work, which all my life I have frequently adopted. When I took the story to Mr. Clarke I suggested that it might be well to bring out summer numbers as well as the Christmas special ones of *The Christian World*. Summer numbers are very common and popular to-day, but thirty years ago they were scarcely known. Mr. Clarke brought out my story in two special holiday numbers. It was thus announced: "A new story, of great dramatic interest, is about to be issued in two special numbers of *The Christian World*." It occupied seventy-five columns. The title was "Summer Clouds, or Storm and Sunshine." The hero of the story was Frank Linnitt, a Cornish lad, who was much beloved by the fisher-folk, to whom he preached. He went to London and became the pastor of a church, working

indefatigably among the poor, and doing good in every way. He spent some weeks in a Kentish hop-garden, and there he had a quarrel with a man who had insulted a girl. After a great struggle with him, the man disappeared, and Linnitt was suspected of having murdered him. He was arrested, and eventually tried and found guilty, the man, who was not dead, appearing too late to save him. The story is very sensational all through, and the failure of Linnitt's friends and his church to get a reprieve is, I think, as I re-read the story in cold blood, really heartrending. The papers containing it had a large sale. Indeed, everybody seemed reading it. I one day sat quietly in a railway carriage, in which three copies were being perused. As we came to the end of our journey one lady exclaimed, "Oh, horrible!" another said, "She has not let him be hung, surely? Then I won't read another word!" The papers were crumpled together, and tossed on one side, and I heard my work criticized in no measured terms.

In 1873 two of my books were published, "The Clarence Family," a story for children, which had run through *The Christian World Magazine*, and "Leaves from Elim," another book of poems which contains those which I myself think best, and which were written through the years of some of my happiest spiritual experiences.

At this time the great controversy on eternal punishment was going on in the columns of *The Christian World*, led by Dr. Cox and the Rev. Edward White and others. Then there was a movement toward a broader outlook over the religious world, and a more generous

theology. Dr. Duff, in his Presidential Address as Moderator in the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, had referred to it, and there was a bold leader in *The Christian World* of May 3, 1873 :—

"Our age, impetuous, daring, headstrong, requires to be admonished as to the duties of reverent faith and patient obedience, but it has reached forward to truth which was not known to our fathers, and this truth it is bound to accept and make the most of. It has found that neither the Bible nor common sense sanctions the whole figment of universal, verbal, infallible inspiration. It has formed expanded conceptions of the Divine Love and the freedom of the Gospel Offer. It has divested itself of many hard, un-Christlike tenets of the theology of blood, and brimstone, and fire; and among other things it has learned to believe that many an one, against whom priests and theological doctors gnashed their teeth as heretics, may have been in the past, and may be in the present, Christ's dearest children. We cannot help thinking that there are some things regarded as heresy which ought rather to be characterized as precious and glorious truth."

The effect which these startling words had upon their readers and the Christian world generally can scarcely be imagined to-day, and is not for me to deal with. The effect they had upon me at first was to nearly break my heart. Nothing that has ever come into my life has made me more sorry, or more full of anxiety; but presently my mind grew steady, and peace came to me with quietness. I am afraid that I acted a coward's part. I was so busy that I resolved not to spare the time, at present, to try to solve the great problems for myself. Stronger brains

than mine were dealing with them, and hearts that I knew were as loyal to truth. "The larger hope" had already attracted me, and I decided to wait, hoping and praying that the light which it was necessary for me to have would come to me gradually. So I laid down the burden, and found there was nothing to be afraid of.

In the meantime my work was all around me, and I turned to it and "did the next thing" as well as I could, finding it, as we all do, the best specific for trouble and anxiety.

I had rather a bad time, though, with certain friends and advisers, who thought that I ought not to retain my connection with a paper of such broad views. Several publishers made me offers, and two rather handsome ones. A gentleman called to see me, a man of wealth and position, who, at his wife's desire, offered me a home for the rest of my life.

"Are you a child of God?" he asked.

"Yes, indeed I am," I said quite confidently.

"Then do you not think that He is able to provide for you?"

"I am sure He has done so," I said. "He has given me a place on the staff of *The Christian World*."

"But you are dishonouring Him by continuing to write for this heretical paper."

"I hope not—I think not," I replied. "The editor leaves me absolutely free to write how and what I please. He has never dictated to me, never found fault with me, and I do not think he ever will. Is it not possible," I said, trying to win a smile, "that a writer

MARIANNE FARNINGHAM AT THE AGE OF FORTY.

whose theology is very old-fashioned, had better continue at her post?"

But he arose in grief and anger, and left me without another word.

I went on with the work in which I had been interrupted, and which was too dear to me ever to be given up until I should be compelled. This is the way in which my work was done, when at my methodical best, which was not by any means always. My mornings were devoted to writing, though generally I took time for a walk. In the afternoons I rested and indulged in a short nap, and in reading. We had tea early, and after it I went directly to work. These were golden hours. All the best things I have produced—and almost all my verses—were in those days written from five to seven, or later in the evenings. I think I must have been at that time a very rapid writer. My verses came to me readily, as indeed did nearly all the subjects on which I wrote.

That was the rule, but there were exceptions, and I very well remember one of them. It was the day for posting my usual verses for *The Christian World*, and I could find nothing to write about. I turned over the leaves of the Bible in vain. I looked out of the window, but the streets and houses had no inspiration for me. I went for a walk, but skies, grass and trees told me nothing. I asked for light, but was conscious of no answer. I went home again, thoroughly discouraged. For the first time I was, after many years, afraid it would be impossible to make any rhymes for the paper that week. Post-time was only an hour off,

and I was in despair. An old volume of *Chambers's Journal* lay on the table. I listlessly opened it and read of a legend or belief of some country to the effect that those whom we had helped on earth would be the first to meet us as we entered heaven. The thought flashed into my mind—

> "Will any one stand at the beautiful gate,
> Waiting and watching for me?"

and I sat down and wrote the verses which have perhaps had more readers than anything else of mine that has been printed. How often have I vainly wished I could recall them! Had half a day instead of half an hour been given to them they might perhaps have been more worthy of the career of usefulness and blessing accorded to them.

But they were dashed off, and a friend who could run caught the post for me.

During the last few years, being unable to sleep in the mornings, I have utilized the fresh early hours for writing. The little book "Women and their Saviour" is made up of short articles so written. Many of my verses have also been produced then. When the world is still, or only beginning to awaken, there is opportunity for reflection and meditation, of which, when feeling well enough, I have tried to make the most. Fountain-pens and stylographs, with the handy writing-pads of the present day are great boons to me. Sometimes a thought has been, I venture to believe, given to me in the dawning, for most of the letters thanking me for particular poems have been drawn forth by this early morning work.

New Work

My life has been very full of interests, and yet in a very real sense my work has been my life. As soon as it began to dawn upon me that I was really helped to write that which was acceptable and useful to people, new desires possessed me. I hope that it may not be considered too personal if I record the fact that, inspired by this knowledge, I passed through a crisis in my religious life that influenced me a good deal. I mention it because it may comfort others in similar experiences.

One Sunday evening I went into the vestry to speak to a number of my girls who were about to take their first communion. I was very happy; but I am sure that I needed a sharp lesson in humility, and I received it. As I walked through the chapel to my pew, a strange thick darkness came upon me, and encompassed my soul. I was suddenly palsied with fear and doubt. Something whispered to me that I had never myself been converted! Who and what was I that I dared to speak and write the things that I did on such solemn matters as those which were my themes? A sickening sense that I was not worthy to take the Lord's Supper with His people caused me to feel that I must leave the chapel; but I trembled so much that I knew I had not physical strength to reach the door. Therefore I remained, not knowing what to do, and so oppressed by a sense of sin that I felt almost as if I should die. I think a battle was being fought for me that evening, for I was too weak to fight it myself.

At last it occurred to me to ask myself what I would say to any girl who told me a similar story. I

knew exactly. I should say, "It is never too late to come to the Saviour for pardon. If you have never before, call upon Him now in prayer and faith. He casts out none. His salvation is for you, as certainly as for any." And then the old hymn, which I and my girls often sang, kneeling, with the twilight filling the room, became my very personal prayer—

> "Just as I am, without one plea,
> But that Thy blood was shed for me,
> And that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee,
> O Lamb of God, I come."

With a deep sense of my own unworthiness, and a new assurance of the blessings of forgiveness and salvation, I took the communion that evening.

But the influence of the experience remained. I seldom spoke of it, but it happened that my friends of many years, the Rev. Joseph Wilshire and Mrs. Wilshire, came to see me soon afterward, and I told him. His wise counsels availed to show me how this sad experience of mine might prove a permanent good to me, and might even help to make me more able to comfort others. I had often, sometimes perhaps too glibly, told God that I would welcome any sorrow that would make me a comforter and helper to others; and I said the same thing now, but more humbly and seriously than before.

I think it was about this time, too, that a new and glad idea of "the will of God" was given to me. I often had sung, with trembling voice, the beautiful hymn by Charlotte Elliott, with the refrain "Thy will be done." I was half afraid to mean the things I said, though the

same ideas were very much more poorly put in most of the things I wrote in my early days. "Anywhere with Jesus," which is in many hymn-books, is a case in point. I meant it all, and felt that I could do anything or go anywhere with Him: my mistake was in supposing that He would be sure to lead me along rough and dangerous places, and call me to give up all the best things which He had given me. I am so thankful to know better now, so that "Thy will be done" is more praise than prayer. If His will be done, sorrows will be blessings, pain be bearable, darkness bring Him nearer, death be a friend, and only sin will be taken away. Well will it be for all the world when the complete answer comes to the petition, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

CHAPTER X

MY FATHER

IT goes without saying that my own people were deeply interested in all my work, and my father especially was proud of it.

He always knew where I was and what I was doing, for, from the time when I went to Northampton in 1860, until he came to live with me in 1879, I wrote to him every week, and saw him as often as I could. He had grave doubts as to whether I was wise in giving up my school, and very little confidence that I could make money by my pen. I remember him saying, "Mr. Clarke will not want to pay you a salary for nothing."

"No," I answered; "I do not expect him to do so."

"Do you suppose, then, that what you do will be worth a hundred or so a year to him?" There was a very uncomplimentary doubt in my father's voice.

"He seems to think so," I said, "and he knows best."

I went to Farningham that summer, to try to set his mind at rest, and I wrote a story, I think "Listening for the Bells," carrying my pen, ink, and paper in the little box which he had made when Miss Rogers first gave me lessons in writing. I used this on my knees as a sort of

desk, and so spent delightful hours scribbling away in the meadows near the river Darent, which I had always loved. It was there, too, that I walked and dreamed and thought through many things, for example, my papers on "Young People," some articles on "Teaching," and "Stories for the Children." During that year I wrote for *The Sunday School Times* twenty-one special articles on Sunday schools, which were afterwards published in book form. Seeing me so busily and happily employed, my father was easily persuaded that I had not run too great a risk in changing my vocation.

The love and joy of my father's life was centred in Eynsford chapel. He never missed a service which it was possible for him to attend, and the years were crowded with small ministries, always rendered without ostentation. He never had much money to give. I think he would have given it all to the cause if he had. He was not a good speaker, so he was never a very prominent man at the meetings, but he did all that he could year after year with unchanging fidelity. My first recollections of him in connection with the chapel are, that when I was a very little child and grew sleepy in our cosy curtained pew by the door on Sunday evenings, I used to rouse up twice during the service to watch my father go steadily down the aisle and snuff the candles. I wondered if he would not some time snuff one out, but practice had made him adroit in the art. There was another curious incident which I remember. My father was always afraid of dogs. I think he would have walked a mile to avoid one that was at all fierce. One morning a dog strolled into the chapel and walked

up the aisle. It was my father's duty to try to get him out. But he sat still, hoping that some one else would do so. No one stirred, however, and at last my father went towards the dog, slowly and timidly. It will scarcely be believed that at that moment the minister was reading the words, in Philippians iii. 2, "Beware of dogs."

A ripple of laughter went through the congregation, in the midst of which my father went back to his seat after seeing that the doors were well open. It was a few minutes before order could be restored, and not until the dog had been bodily carried out—though not by my father.

One pleasant official duty which fell to him was to receive and welcome any stranger who might come to the chapel to preach. Years after my father's death ministers have told me how exceedingly kind he was to them, making them feel at home and comfortable, especially if they were young men. It was his duty to show visitors to their seats, and sometimes he opened the pew doors for those who were members, especially if they were old people or very young. He had always a kind and appropriate word with which to welcome those who had recently joined the church. I remember on one occasion when Mr. Spurgeon was preaching, how happy he was in seeing the little chapel crowded out, aisles and galleries filled, and groups standing around the doorways. The weather was warm, and the windows were open to let in air. Mr. Spurgeon was at this time a very young man, and those who knew him then will remember that he wore his hair parted near the middle, and there was a loose lock that hung over his forehead.

The wind ruffled this, which rather irritated him. After brushing it back several times, he stopped and said: "Will you kindly close that window?"

My father rose and considered for a moment how it was to be done; clearly not from the inside, as it was a physical impossibility to force his way through the people to the pew over which the window was placed. He managed to get through the crowd at the door, and went round the outside of the chapel. But he was very short, and could not reach the offending window. He went into the vestry, but there was not a chair or stool to be had. In the meantime Mr. Spurgeon became impatient.

"Please shut that window!" he exclaimed peremptorily.

My father had gone to the nearest house to see if he could borrow a chair and a broom, with which to push up the sash. Just before it was accomplished, Mr. Spurgeon said, "Oh, do shut the window! I am not like Burton beer, best on draught."

Mr. Whittemore quietly explained to him that it would be done directly, and thereafter, to the relief of the people, the sash was pushed up.

What a day that was! The young preacher was at his best, and he talked of divine things as only the Divine Teacher could have taught him. His sermon was an experimental one, and contained truths such as one never before heard except from aged lips, but which moved the hearts of all to firmer faith and deeper devotion.

Toward evening the wind sank, and the weather was

absolutely perfect. The people had increased in numbers, and the officials were wondering what to do when Mr. Spurgeon settled it.

"We will not try to get them into the chapel," he said. "It would be cruelty to animals. There is an orchard quite near. Let us borrow that."

No sooner said than done. We sat on the green grass, under the shade of the trees. A waggon was brought forward to furnish Mr. Spurgeon with a pulpit, and at six o'clock he looked down on a sea of eager faces, lighted with joy and anticipation. We sang "All hail the power of Jesus' Name;" and "Crown Him, crown Him" went trembling across the fields, and stole up the banks and reached the hearts of the trees.

Mr. Spurgeon read the seventy-second Psalm, and his beautiful voice, clear as a bell, rang out the prophetic words: "His Name shall endure for ever. His Name shall be continued as long as the sun. Men shall be blessed in Him, and all nations shall call Him blessed." I think I have seldom read the psalm since without hearing his voice at the conclusion of it. "Let the whole earth be filled with His glory, Amen and Amen," and then in other tones, which made one feel the appropriateness of the sequel, "The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended."

Between the afternoon and evening services Mr. Whittemore introduced me to Mr. Spurgeon.

"So you are the great Marianne Farningham," he said.

And I replied, "And you are the great Charles Spurgeon."

After this, and the tea we had together, we were friends for the rest of the years.

My father always read Mr. Spurgeon's sermons, and heard them when he could. But I think that his theology, as much of it as he had, was on a broader basis than they. I remember a talk which I had with him after I had attended the Brighton Convention "for the Deepening of the Spiritual Life." These meetings made a great impression on me, and I was never quite the same after them. Religion was much more real to me, and I perceived a little of the meaning of the Higher Christian Life. When I entered the dome for the first meeting, one of prayer, the people were singing the hymn—

"I need Thee every hour."

which moved me to tears of desire. This was followed by

"Sometimes I catch sweet glimpses of His face,
But that is all."

and later by that hymn of Monod, who was present—

"Oh, the bitter shame and sorrow."

The prayers and the addresses at these meetings were like nothing which I had ever heard, and to me they were very illuminating. Christ as my Saviour I had long known, but Christ as my King I saw for the first time. During that wonderful week certain truths grasped me which have not to this day loosened their hold—the fulness of salvation, the guidance of the Spirit, the constant presence of Christ, the unreasonableness of care and anxiety, and, deeper than all, the wonderful love of God so little comprehended before.

Never after did I find it possible to be afraid of everlasting punishment, so assured was I that love would find some other way. A great hope arose within me that there might be unread meanings in some of the words of the Lord Jesus, which as yet we had not fully understood. In any case, I lost a burden at Brighton which has never since been laid upon me, and I am profoundly thankful for the joyousness which then entered into my personal experience.

I see that I wrote several articles about the meetings for *The Christian World*, especially the Women's Meetings conducted by Mrs. Pearsall Smith; and in the verses that I wrote about that time, and afterwards there was an underflow of new life.

I went back to my class and told the girls about it; and, what was almost as good, I soon took the opportunity of talking it all over with my father. It was a great joy to find, though he was scarcely aware of it himself, that his outlook was wider than that of many, and that he had great hope of the world, through the Life, Death, and Resurrection of our Saviour. He asked me to write some special verses for him, and for a friend of his on Salvation. "Bring the words and the meaning into every verse, Polly," he said, "and do not be afraid to use them over and over again."

My father was known among the Eynsford chapel folk as the "Peacemaker." He was good at pouring oil on troubled waters, and bringing reconciliation to those who were at enmity. He could not bear strife, and though I cannot honestly say that he was altogether a good-tempered man, he yet was very clever at

making other people so. He loved harmony of all kinds, the wind among the wheat-ears, the whisper of the trees, the songs of birds on the hedges. He delighted in singing. When we were all at home what times we had over the singing of hymns and songs! Sometimes my father gave out the hymns at chapel, and then he was able to see the whole congregation, and, although he was not a bold man, he generally administered a rebuke to those who took no part in the psalmody. He was very fond of flowers, and wore one or two in his buttonhole almost all the year round.

During later years it became the custom for my father and his wife to spend Christmas at my sister's house at Northampton. It was a festival to which we all looked forward with keen pleasure, but often he was very unwell, and the long, cold journey tried both him and Mrs. Hearn.[1] The last time they came together, the latter, who was far from well when she started, took cold on the journey, and became ill, and unable to return. It was a very sad New Year, for she died at the beginning of it.

As soon as matters could be arranged, my father came to live with me at Northampton. He helped me choose my house, and liked it all the better because it was on the edge of the Common, and looked over the green space to the country. He liked, too, to be near a town, which was a new experience to him. He had lived a very active life, and though he was now weak through chronic asthma, he could not be quite happy to have no occupation. During that first year of his residence with me he did a little bit of work which

pleased him very much. He compiled a birthday text-book, choosing verses of mine to go with his selection of texts from the Bible. It was called "The Story of the Years," and was got up to make a rather nice-looking gift-book. It has long been out of print.

My father only remained two years in Northampton, in the latter of which he was married. But he was more or less ill all the time. The cold east winds of March were more than he could bear, and during those of March, 1889, he became very ill. On April 7th he passed away, dying in an easy-chair in my study, where he liked to be, when he found it impossible to lie down in bed.

CHAPTER XI

LECTURES

IT was through my Bible class that I became for a few years a public speaker. Every Sunday afternoon, especially before we inhabited our class-room, I addressed from the platform in the chapel quite a congregation of young women who occupied the pews. Besides the girls whose names were on the register, friends and visitors used to come in and quietly take their seats. My only stipulation was that men should not be admitted ; a girl was stationed at the door to say to any gentleman who might wish to come that it was not a public meeting, but a girls' Bible-class. Fewer visitors and strangers came after we went into the class-room, but for many years the number was so large that I lost most of my nervousness.

My first appearance in public was also connected with the class. I was asked to read a paper at an annual meeting of the Sunday School Union on that ever-recurring problem, "How to Retain Our Elder Scholars." The request was that I should describe my own methods, which I endeavoured to do. Mr. Clarke came to hear it, and this was a pleasure to me, as was also the general sympathy evoked by my paper. It

was afterwards, with some additions, made into a booklet, under the title of "Who Will Take It?"

My temerity in doing this, as in much of my other work, often fills me with surprise and some shame; but perhaps a little justification was in the fact that, at least in the South of England, there were at that time few Sunday schools that were able to keep their hold on girls and lads of from fifteen to twenty years of age, and it seemed right to pass on what I thought were the means by which this might be done.

I had no idea then that other public work lay before me, for I was naturally shy and retiring, unused to society, and not greatly desiring it. But I cannot help thinking that the development of our lives is to a large extent not in our own care. We may not always recognize the guiding hand, but we are led, and must follow. I never meant to be a public speaker, until I found myself started on the career. Of course, then I did the best I could, and found much pleasure in it; but my best was very poor, as no one knew better than I myself. The too flattering words spoken with votes of thanks to which I listened used often to make me feel more sad than glad.

In 1877 there was much talk throughout the country on "Women's Rights." I was vain enough to think that I had something to say on the subject, and at first thought I would write some articles on it; but others were doing this, and it occurred to me that if I could speak my thoughts, and so deliver them, I might have a public to listen. So I wrote a lecture, calling it "The Women of To-day." First I asked a friend

living at Daventry, not far from Northampton, Mr. Billingham, the schoolmaster, if he cared to make arrangements for me, offering him half the profits, if there were any, for his trouble. So one evening my sister, my brother, his wife, and I drove to Daventry, and I delivered my lecture. I was a good deal more nervous than I expected to be; but two or three things were established—one was that I could easily make myself heard, and another that my hearers appeared to be interested. There was not a large profit, but we had more than enough to pay expenses. Then I wrote to my lifelong friend, Mrs. Wilshire (*née* Lewis), who now resided at Derby. She was quite pleased with the idea, and told me that Mr. William Hall would make arrangements for me if I would deliver the lecture in that town. In due time I went to do so. I remember we walked from her house to the hall, and as we reached it I saw with dismay a number of carriages driving up to the doors. "Oh," I exclaimed, "what a pity! There is something else going on at the same time." Mrs. Wilshire drily said, "Does it not occur to you that possibly the carriages have brought people to hear you?" It had not done so; but I found that her surmise was correct. The chair was to be taken by a lady much respected in Derby, Mrs. Roe, and it was greatly due to that fact that the hall was filled. Then Mrs. Wilshire wrote to a mutual friend living in Birmingham, Mr. Henry Chapman, and he, with the Rev. Henry Jarman, a Baptist minister whom I knew, kindly undertook to arrange for me there; and they must have taken considerable trouble over the arrangements. The

lecture was to be given in the room of the Young Men's Christian Association. In their eagerness to do the best they could, they had sold more tickets than the hall could accommodate, and when I arrived there was a great crowd round the door, and my two kind friends were very perplexed as to what to do. I could not myself get in, but had to wait outside in the crowd for some time. Mr. Jarman sent a man to ask me if I would repeat the lecture the next night. I said "Yes," and he shouted, "Friends, don't crush; Miss Hearn will give the same lecture to-morrow evening." This had not the slightest effect, for they had never heard of Miss Hearn. But at last I managed to send up a message to him to say, "Marianne Farningham will repeat the lecture to-morrow." And then people began quietly to retire. As they did so an old lady, whose face I have never forgotten, said, with her hand on my shoulder, "Oh, my dear, why, you have got grey hair! God bless you." It gave me a lump in my throat, for it was like a benediction, and it steadied and comforted me when I began my work.

Of course, I was very thankful for the fees these lectures produced, and glad that almost immediately after invitations flowed in from all parts of the country. Some of them were couched in very kind language, and I saw to my great surprise a possibility of success. I went to London to consult with Mr. Clarke, for I was not sure that people would like my little bits of verse and prose so well after they had seen the very plain little woman who wrote them, and I should have been sorry for such a result to follow. Mr. Clarke, however,

encouraged me to go on, and accept the invitations that came to me. He said he had no doubt there were many people in the country who would like to see and hear me. So I commenced to lay plans for what proved to be a very serious business. My determination was to give the lectures chiefly under the auspices of local Sunday School Unions, or other helpful Societies, such as the Young Men's Christian Association, hoping that they, as well as I, might receive pecuniary benefit. I had a kind, good friend and companion living with me, who was willing to accompany me, and we were able to arrange dates and places so as not to be obliged to travel too long distances. I resolved to come home from everywhere to take my class on Sunday. Happily, I am a good traveller, and in those days could take successive train journeys without being over-wearied, though I am afraid it was rather hard on my friend. Fortunately, she was interested in that which very much delighted me, she too liked seeing fresh places; and this lecturing campaign gave her the opportunity. We had the best times in the north of England, where Sunday schools flourish exceedingly, and where I was gratified to find hosts of friends of *The Sunday School Times.* A letter that came to me from Mr. Crosland, of Huddersfield, was very specially kind. "Come and stay with us, in our Yorkshire homes," he wrote, "see our Sunday schools, and let us drive you over our Yorkshire moors." I had never seen a moor previously, and the thought of the hills and the heather attracted me greatly. Huddersfield was naturally one of the first towns to

which I went. Mr. and Mrs. Crosland had a daughter, a sweet and very gifted girl, who afterwards married the Rev. Henry Dyson, and whose books, "The Story of the Trees," "Children's Flowers," "Apples and Oranges," and others, published by the Religious Tract Society, have delighted thousands of young people. She also for some time wrote the Morning Lesson for *The Sunday School Times*. I enjoyed the hospitality of that home in Huddersfield every year as long as I continued my lectures.

From nearly all large towns some committee sent me an invitation, and in most of them hospitality was offered. The privilege was thus given to me of becoming acquainted with some of the most happy Nonconformist homes in the kingdom. I stayed with Mr. and Mrs. Snape of Liverpool, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Crossley of Halifax, Mr. and Mrs. Spark Evans of Bristol, Mr. and Mrs. Slade of Leeds, Mr. and Mrs. Cadbury of Birmingham, Mr. and Mrs. Kirkpatrick of Walsall, Mr. and Mrs. Bramwell of Sheffield, and others too numerous to mention. With the last-named most of my Continental holidays have been taken, and I spend often pleasant weeks in their homes at Sheffield and Grindleford, and, thanks to their kindness, have been frequently driven through the beautiful dales of Derbyshire.

My lectures gave me the opportunity of meeting many men and women whose names are as "household words" in the activities of the churches, and also of coming into contact with much of their life and work.

The lecturing tours, too, provided me with a large

number of subjects for papers in *The Christian World.* Under the general headings of "Christian Work in the Provinces," and "Towns and their Trades," I wrote two series of articles, such as "Mission Work in Leeds," "Sunday Schools at Huddersfield," "The Orphans at Halifax," "The Young Women's Christian Association at Bath," and "The Children's Hospital at Liverpool." I saw biscuits made at Reading, alpaca at Sir Titus Salt's works, china at Worcester, cutlery at Sheffield, cotton goods in Lancashire, woollen materials in Yorkshire, carpets in Halifax, shipbuilding at Sunderland, hosiery at Leicester, lace at Nottingham, and many other works in many other places. Always very kind courtesy was shown me by the large employers of labour, and I became somewhat acquainted with the workers themselves. I heard the girls sing as they went through the streets with shawls over their heads, as only North-country girls can sing. We seemed to understand each other, and nothing gave me more pleasure than to hear of one girl who said, as she went out after a lecture, "I will go home and be thick with me feyther."

It happened that now and then some notable event, pleasant or sad, occurred at the time of my visits to certain towns. For instance, I had been lecturing at Swansea on the evening of a terrible storm which was very disastrous in its effects at the Mumbles, when the lifeboat was wrecked, and several of the crew were drowned. Two girls, daughters of the lighthouse keeper, had bravely gone down to the sea, and by tying their cloaks together and wading into the water, managed to

throw them within reach of the desperate hands of the men, and so saved several. My host thought I should go to the Mumbles and see the scene for myself.

I found Miss Ace quietly ironing her father's shirts in the kitchen of the lighthouse home as if nothing had happened.

"I want to shake hands with you. May I?" She looked rather surprised, but gave me her hand. "How brave and noble you were yesterday!" I said, and I could scarcely speak steadily.

"Oh no! Any one would have done the same," she replied quietly.

"I have read the account in the papers," I said. "All the world is ringing with the names of you and your sister."

"Yes, somebody said we were in the papers," she remarked quite indifferently, taking up the iron to go on with her work.

I went into the poor home which had lost three lifeboat heroes, and never shall I forget it. Sad, heartbroken people they were, an old man and an old woman and a young widow, and they were vainly trying to take their midday meal of bread and butter and tea.

It was in January of the year 1880 that the most exciting episode occurred to me. I was to give a lecture that night at Merthyr Tydvil. It began to snow soon after we started, and at Abergavenny, where we changed carriages, a blizzard was blowing. I and my friend got a cup of coffee there, and it was a good thing we did, for it was all we had that day. The train moved very slowly, stopping sometimes for half an hour, and then

creeping on again, coming at last to a standstill in a cutting near Rhymney Bridge. It was then about half-past seven, but I was hoping that I might yet be able to keep my engagement at Merthyr, if the train would only get on. It remained in that cutting the whole of that night, and all the next day and night. We were alone in a second-class carriage, and with our wraps were able to keep moderately comfortable ; but though we had closed the windows tightly, there was a heap of snow on the cushion. We once tried to open the window and look out, but the blast and rush of snow that took our breath away made us quick to close it again. When about an hour had passed the door was thrown open, and the guard sprang in. He had come to see how we were getting on, and if we would like a little whiskey! We declined that, but begged him to try and get us something to eat, if only a bit of bread. He was afraid that was impossible, but said he would try. About eleven o'clock he came in again. By this time we were pretty miserable with cold and hunger, loneliness and delay. He told us we were near a railway station, and said he thought if he carried us through a drift we could make our way in. We did so, and half regretted that we had left the shelter of our carriage, for the station was small, and was filled with people. The floor was a river of melted snow. There were very few seats, and the scene was a most wretched one. A gentleman made his way to us through the crowd. "Ah," he said, "when I heard there were two ladies in a second-class carriage I thought it was you. Come through into the ticket-office." A porter opened the door with a flourish, saying,

"This way, ladies, please." We were fortunate to find this gentleman there, for we had been entertained in his home not long before. All the people knew him, as he was the manager of large works at Ebbwvale, and for his sake the railway officials did what they could for us. Two of the few chairs that were available were placed at our service, and we had seats by the side of a glorious fire. But that night was like a month; the minutes seemed like hours. Only a few of the men appeared to have courage and vivacity to speak at all. One man walked about among his fellow-sufferers, saying, "This will be ten pounds out of my pocket," until our friend rebuked him. "Hold your tongue about your paltry ten pounds," he said. "Vessels will be going ashore in Cardiff Bay, and many people will be losing their lives to-night, and you keep harping on your miserable money." Another man was more cheerful about his loss. "Oh, I wish I had obeyed my wife," he said. "She wanted me not to come, but to write instead. Never, never, never will I disobey my wife again, if once I get safely back to her." The guard managed to remain facetious. When everything was quiet, and some of us were dozing, he blew his whistle sharply, which made us wake up, hoping we were about to start again. It was considered a joke at first, but it made everybody angry afterwards. One old woman was very ill, and we were afraid she would die in her chair, but somebody had a little brandy, and it revived her. It was found that several of the men were canvassers for tea, and had samples with them, which were produced, and we hoped we might get a teaspoonful

each, but there was no water on the premises, and it takes a large quantity of snow to make a cup of tea. Toward morning one of the porters made his way to the scattered houses that were near, and brought back two loaves which he had taken hot out of an oven, and a bit of bread was served to each of us. The man was very exhausted, and I heard afterwards that he narrowly escaped death from the effects of his gallant effort to feed the starving. His fight with the elements that wild morning was a braver deed, I think, than that of many a soldier on the battlefield.

As soon as it was light, many of the people left to try and make their way over the mountains to their homes. Our friend was very anxious to get away, because a wedding-party awaited him. He made a tempting offer to one of the men to take him a few miles to the house of some friends. We felt very disconsolate when he went away. In the afternoon, when those who were left were dreading the coming night, the door was thrown open, and a gentleman, covered with snow, and looking like a veritable Father Christmas, came in.

"Oh, Miss Farningham," he said, "I am glad to find you here!"

I have always been sorry that I impatiently replied, "I am not at all glad to be here."

"Ah, but," he said, "you might be in a worse place," and he told me of many who had not been able to leave their snowed-up trains, and how impossible it was for them to be either warmed or fed. He said there were seven or eight trains in the Rhymney Cutting

quite unable to move, most of them containing cattle-trucks, and the cries of the poor animals were terrible to hear. He added that earlier in the day they had tried with a pair of horses to bring a carriage to us, but it was impossible. He brought us some Liebig's extract of beef, and other things which were worth their weight in gold, and he added to his great kindnesses by persuading the station-master and his wife to sit up a few hours during the coming night that we might lie down. He was indeed a good Samaritan!

The next day we heard that if we could walk across the mountains for a mile or two we could strike the Great Western line, on which some trains were running. With difficulty, and with a guide to help us, we did so, and got a train to Cardiff. I was to have delivered a lecture at Cardiff on the night after the Merthyr Tydvil one, and the minister who had engaged me met us at the station. His first words were, "Ah, Miss Farningham, this is very sad. You ought to have been here yesterday. To break faith with the public is a most unfortunate thing."

I stared at him in a helpless way, but my friend, the most equable and peace-loving person in the world, flushed up and spoke a few words to him that actually made me feel almost warm and comfortable. He went away, and we ordered at the station, the best hot dinner that we could get. Never was there such soup as we tasted then! We were now able to send telegrams to our friends to assure them of our safety. We got dry as well as we could, and I was able to fulfil my engagement on the third night by giving a lecture at Newport.

Of course it became necessary to follow up "The

Women of To-day" with other lectures, and I wrote one each year for five years—"The Rush and the Hush of Life," "Help-meets and Hinderers," "The Women of Yesterday," "The Women of the Bible," and "Two Queens: Elizabeth and Victoria." By far the most popular of them all was "The Rush and the Hush of Life." I delivered it more than two hundred times, and many thousands of people listened to it. I wish it had been more worthy of so great an opportunity!

This lecture was not unsuitable for a chapel, and as chapels were usually available to the friends who made the arrangements it was often delivered in them, in all parts of the country. I never felt at home in a pulpit, and did not speak from one unless in response to a very strong wish on the part of the people themselves. Perhaps conscience and St. Paul had a little to do with that! If the minister were present, I asked beforehand his forgiveness if the people should laugh—because I meant to make them, for two reasons: first, to be sure that I was being heard, and secondly that we might all become free and friendly together without loss of time. My words were always directed to the people who were seated the farthest from me, and if they were grave and unmoved it was a sign that a little more force and clearness must be put into my voice.

The following extract of a report appeared in *The Christian World* of November 16, 1877 :—

"THE WOMEN OF TO-DAY.

(From *The Western Daily Press.*)

"Last Monday evening a lecture on this subject was delivered in the Ebenezer chapel, Old King Street, by Miss

Marianne Farningham, the well-known author of 'Leaves from Elim.' Mr. S. A. Hayman presided, and introduced the lecturer in a few brief remarks. Miss Farningham, who was very cordially received, in the first place reminded the gentlemen present that not only was the subject of her lecture 'The Women of To-day,' but it was addressed to members of her own sex. The braver sex, who had honoured her with their presence, would excuse her if she directed no words especially to them; those who were married would be almost sure to know what women's lectures were (laughter), and those who had no knowledge of that kind would the more readily forgive her, if instead of presuming to lecture them—perhaps they often deserved it (laughter)—she endeavoured to lecture their lecturers. (Renewed laughter and applause.)

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"The lecture throughout was eagerly listened to, and at its close a vote of thanks was accorded to Miss Farningham. The proceeds, after defraying expenses, will be devoted to the Young Men's Christian Association, under whose auspices the lecture was given."

One true story put in one of the lectures, which always amused my hearers, because it told so delightfully against myself, was this: I was talking once to a working man, when he told me that he could not write, and was sorry for it, because he wanted to send some money home to his wife, and would have liked a letter to go with it. I offered to write the letter for him, if he would tell me what to say. He thanked me, and we began:—

"My Dear Wife,—I write these few lines hoping to find you quite well, as it leaves me at present. I enclose a post-office order. It is not for so much as I wish it was, but I hope

you will make it go as far as you can. I hope the children are well. Kiss them for me. So, no more at present, from your affectionate HUSBAND."

I was proceeding to blot and fold the letter when he said, "Stop a minute. You had better say, '*Excuse bad writing and bad spelling.*'"

I added the postscript, and thought we had come to the end of the business. But the man said, "Don't be in such a hurry. There's something else I want to say to my wife, but I don't just know how to put it."

I waited, and he presently said, "Tell my wife that the thought of her and my happy home is keeping me straight and sober; and by God's help I'll be a better man in the future than I was in the past." Of course, this second postscript gave me a good point, of which I endeavoured to make the best use.

The most trying time I remember was when a gentleman engaged me for a week's lectures at Whitehaven, and other towns in the neighbourhood. I cannot recollect why, but I happened to be alone, which was the less consequence, because a lady and gentleman among the kindest of my kind friends took me in and cared for me. The manager was not quite satisfied with the financial result of these lectures, and asked me to stay over Sunday, and give an address in the evening at one of the larger towns, which I promised to do. So on Saturday evening I went to this place. As I was taking a look round, in order to see if I could get an article for *The Christian World* out of it, a young man stepped from an office, and told me that my late host wanted to speak to

me. It was my first acquaintance with the telephone, and I was greatly amazed to hear my friend's voice and his laugh, and yet not see him. He said that he and his wife were not very comfortable about me, and had decided to drive over to the meeting the next evening and take me back with them. I was much touched by their kind thought, and afterwards more thankful than words could say.

When Sunday evening came I was very tired, but thought that only a little would be expected of me, and perhaps a few minutes of Evangelistic talk would be sufficient. But when I reached the hall at eight o'clock, I found it an immense place crowded with well-dressed people, two thousand of them, who had come from the churches and chapels, and occupied every foot of standing room, while the platform was filled with the various choirs. To the best of my recollection I had not so much as a few notes to help me, and I was so weary that I could not think. Never before or since have I been so frightened. If I could only have fallen through the floor! But I was helped.

I cannot be sure that my memory serves me faithfully, but I believe it was at this meeting that I first related an incident so beautiful in itself that it ought to be repeated here. A girl in my Bible class was very ill, and indeed dying of consumption. She was a Christian, and life was naturally dear to her. Yet, when she knew that the end was inevitable, she became loyally submissive, surrendering herself to the will of God in such serenity and peace of spirit that it was a privilege to visit her. She had a sorrow of which she seldom

spoke, for her father had imbibed the atheistical ideas which at the time were being freely discussed in Northampton. She was very fond of him, and he was a kind and affectionate father. One day, for a little while, and from some cause which no one could explain, her faith seemed strangely to forsake her, and a black cloud of fear and doubt settled upon her, which brought her great grief and depression. Her mother told her father about it when he came from his work to dinner. He went upstairs to try to cheer her. "Come, Annie, my girl," he said, "you mustn't give way. I don't know what we shall all do if you cannot keep bright. Cheer up, my dear; I'll stay with you a few minutes, and read something to you." She thanked him, but rather sadly, for he sometimes read extracts from books and papers which gave her nothing but pain. The man, however, knew the only words that should be read to his child in these sad moments, and he turned over the leaves of the Book, and when he had found what he looked for, began to read softly :—

"*Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.*

"*In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.*

"*And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also*" (John xiv. 1–3).

As he read, the black clouds dispersed, and the girl's face became radiant.

"Beautiful, beautiful!" she whispered.

"Yes," the man admitted, "it is very beautiful indeed."

"And so true. Isn't Jesus wonderful, father?"

"I suppose He is. Those words of His have had a wonderful effect on you, anyhow, my girl, and I am very glad."

"Father, you won't say anything against Him after this, will you? And you'll come back to Him, won't you?"

With tears in his eyes the man bent and kissed her, and his daughter was comforted.

It was never my intention to continue this public work for any length of time; and indeed it could not well be done, for during two of the six or seven years I gave a hundred lectures each winter in a hundred different places, and I am afraid they were poor things. But I am always glad to have made the experiment. Several pleasant results followed. The more I saw of my native land the more beautiful it appeared to me. The profits enabled me to purchase a house of my own in Northampton, and this was a consummation for which to be thankful. But the most wonderful part of it all was the marvellously kind receptions I met with, and the affectionate greetings which shone in so many eyes. Night after night have I thanked God that He had heard and so graciously answered the prayers of my dear father, when as a child I knelt beside him, while in spite of my plain face and shy manners, he asked that I might "find favour." My lecturing experience proved that the one great gift of my life has been the favour of the people. And I

knew that it was not only or chiefly the lectures that gave me so many friends, but the little things which I had been helped to write for so many years, and which had the unspeakable advantage of the very wide circulation of *The Christian World*. I was indeed fortunate in having secured such a constituency. It must happen to few journalists to be brought face to face with their readers as I have been. For the most part, all literary work is like Longfellow's "arrow shot in the air." But my experience has been singularly happy, and in sincere humility I wish here to record—for I cannot express—my deep gratitude to God for His favour.

"I breathed a song into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where,
For who has sight so keen and strong,
That it can follow the flight of a song?

"Long, long afterwards, in an oak,
I found the arrow still unbroke,
And the song from beginning to end,
I found again in the heart of a friend."

CHAPTER XII

TRAVELS

BEFORE I had been writing for very many years it became apparent that if I hoped to retain the interest of my readers I must frequently travel, and see fresh scenes, places, and people. Perhaps had I lived in London I might have felt this less, but Northampton, except for the fellowship of a few intellectual friends and the inspiring ministry of Mr. Brown, was not suggestive of a great variety of topics. My kind of work, short articles, poems, and stories, made a greater demand upon my resources than if I had been writing novels. The fear haunted me of becoming dull, monotonous, and uninteresting. It was as well that I did not know for how many years I was to continue writing! However, as soon as I could possibly afford it, I went away from home several times a year, to see what I could find. Of course this has always been very expensive, and indeed a very large part of my income has been spent in this way. But I am convinced that I could not have gone on earning my salary so long by any other means, and I have been able to combine business and pleasure to a rather unusual extent. I must have been born a traveller, for I could always bear maximum journeys

with minimum fatigue. Often when feeling too unwell to think or write, a ride in a train has blown away my headache, and given me an idea of which I promptly and thankfully endeavoured to make the most. I have done a good deal of writing in trains, but very little reading, and never much talking. It was always most pleasant to sit quite still, preferably in a carriage by myself, and, looking lazily through the windows, let thought and feeling come as they would.

It has been my privilege, therefore, in the pursuit of my two kinds of work, to go almost completely over our own dear land, and to take pleasant excursions into other countries, the one underlying aim of it all being to sustain and increase the interest and usefulness of my contributions to *The Christian World* and *The Sunday School Times.*

I have, I think, seen all our cathedrals, walked by all our principal rivers, sojourned in most of our health resorts, and climbed at least some of our mountains. In England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, I have spent delightful, though always busy times. I had once a great desire to walk around our own coast, but it was a feat that I was never able to accomplish. I must have seen and enjoyed most of the places that are on the shores of our island, north, south, east, and west. Generally I have kept away from the large towns during the season, preferring to visit them before or after the crowds. My inclination, too, has been rather toward villages than cities; my life ordinarily being full of people and incident, I have sought refreshment and rest in quiet places. I have often strayed into some old

village church, and greatly enjoyed the service, the beautiful prayers and the Litany having afforded me much spiritual profit; and I have ever loved the little chapels of the country, and the people who frequent and support them. Stories have been told me of the sacrifice and devotion, the fervour and faithfulness of agricultural labourers and their employers which have made me proud to be an Englishwoman. I have always been a lover of sermons, and a sympathetic listener. It has been my privilege to hear most of the master preachers of the day, but my soul has been as much stirred sometimes by listening to a village preacher who has walked with God through woods and fields, and gained from them such knowledge of Him as could never have been won from books or in college.

Now and then there have been things to smile at. Once in a Methodist Chapel in Cornwall the expected minister had not arrived, so three young men took the service between them. One stood up before us, and gave a very fair address with closed eyes, which he only opened once, and that once nearly brought disaster, for he became almost too agitated to proceed. "When I look at this respectable congregation," he said, "I wonder at my own boldness." But he shut his eyes again, and went on to the end. The second commenced by saying, "My friends, I am not going to preach a sermon to you, but only a short talk." At which a man in the congregation uttered the fervent response, "Praise the Lord!" The third speaker simply told the story of his conversion, which he said took place one quiet night on the sea. But that was so naturally

and winsomely narrated that it was worth going far to hear.

On another occasion in a Yorkshire village a lifeboatman was preaching on Paul and Silas in prison. "What did they sing?" he asked. "My friends," he continued, "we local preachers are much scoffed at in the papers. In a daily newspaper this injustice was done us. It was said that a local preacher, after asking 'What did Paul and Silas sing in prison?' answered, 'Why, one of good old John Wesley's hymns, of course.' What a libel! As if a man who could pass the local preachers' examination of the Primitive Methodists would be so out in his dates as that. We are not told what they sang. I myself think it was the grand Te Deum!"

This preacher at the end of his service referred to the fact that he had been instrumental in saving several lives from drowning, and he drew from it rather a fine illustration. "I have never been able," he said, "to save a life when the drowning man struggled to save himself; but when he became too weak to do anything but trust to me, then I could save him. This shows that if we want the Lord Jesus to save us we must be willing to do nothing, and leave Him to do everything for us."

Many interesting incidents occurred in various places. I attended a never-to-be-forgotten prayer-meeting at Flamborough, held in the Fisherman's chapel, by the men who were leaving next day for the North Sea fisheries. They knew that they might have perhaps to face death, and as they commended themselves and their wives and children to God, brave voices broke a little.

But what was so beautiful was their calm trust in Him "Who holds the waters in the hollow of His hand." They were not afraid to go and do their duty. Heaven was as near by sea as by land, and as easy to be reached.

Some unknown friends, who reside on the north-east coast, hearing that I was in the neighbourhood, kindly sent me an invitation to be present at a wedding that was about to take place in the family—an invitation which I accepted with pleasure. In the afternoon, before the young people went off on their honeymoon, a gentleman asked me if I would call on an old fisherman, who had read *The Christian World* for many years, and had lately lost his wife. The poor man was so extremely deaf that I do not think he could hear a word I said, but he talked to me freely about the help-meet who had left his home desolate, and related to me some of his experiences on the sea. He told me that of all the characters in the Bible he liked Job the best, and had most sympathy with him, and that he had learnt by heart the book of Job. Would I like him to recite part of it to me? I gave him to understand that I should be delighted to listen. Never have I heard anything more wonderful than that dramatic recitation. He related the story given in the first and second chapters, changing his voice as the persons were changed, and giving the narrative as if he had been an eye-witness; and then he personified first Job, then Eliphaz, and Bildad and Zophar as if they debated with him. Sometimes his voice was pitiful, as if he had become the suffering Job himself, then scornful and sarcastic, with a mocking

smile upon his lips, then indignant, then beseeching, until at last—"The Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind."—Here the manner and the voice of the reciter changed altogether. It was a wonderful performance throughout. He must have delivered it, at least in imagination, many times, while the sea beat an accompaniment, and the man felt himself face to face with God.

I have spent many pleasant hours with the fishermen around our shores. They are delightful men to talk to, and from their faith in God, and their realization of salvation through Christ, I have learnt many a lesson. My poem, "The Last Hymn," which has, perhaps, been as much liked as anything I have written, was the outcome of an event which was related to me in Wales.

Once when I was enjoying the hospitality of friends in South Devon, the Cornish fishing fleet was driven by stormy weather into Kingsbridge harbour. "There will not be a single extra pint of beer sold at any of the public-houses during their stay," said my friend to me. The chapel was opened, and placed at their disposal, and on one evening I was asked to speak to them. It touched my heart to hear those men pray, and that which they asked for me was the blessing of which just then I felt greatly in need. It was good to hear them at night in their boats on the water. They seemed to sing themselves to sleep with Sankey's hymns, and to begin them again directly they awoke in the early morning.

But I must not weary my readers with too many reminiscences, though I may perhaps be pardoned for giving one more. I was walking through a village

street by the sea when I saw a woman standing in the doorway of a cottage. Her face was an arresting one, it was so grand, and her form so perfect, I could scarcely take my eyes from her. "That is a wonderful-looking woman," I said, "and her fine face seems familiar to me; yet I have never been here before, and cannot have seen her."

"Ah," said my friend. "You have most likely seen that face in the Royal Academy. It has been painted by more than one artist."

"It is a face that tells a story?" I suggested.

"Yes," he replied. "That woman is old and grey-headed now, but she is still fascinating. As a girl, however, I have been told that she was remarkably beautiful. But hers was the common lot of the women hereabouts, father and brothers having been drowned. She declared that she would never marry a fisherman, for she would always dread a repetition of the sorrow. But there was a young boatman whom she loved, and we know that perfect love casts out fear. He was a Christian young man, and had faith in prayer, and he believed that if she said 'yes' to him God would grant their request, and keep him from a watery grave. With the simple, child-like confidence of these people she vowed to God that if He would preserve from drowning this life that was dear to her, she would accept with resignation any other trouble He might send, a vow she often repeated. They were married, and had some twenty years of happiness together. It was his habit on Sunday mornings, when he was not at sea, to make his wife a cup of tea, and take it up to her room. One

morning he went downstairs as usual to do this. She heard him light the fire, heard the sticks crackle, knew when he put the kettle on, and utilized the minutes, as always while it was boiling, for private prayer. She heard the kettle sing, and next boil over; and then, wondering at her husband's silence, she went downstairs and found him dead on his knees. She remembered her vow, and kept it through all the sorrow for his death and the loneliness of her widowhood."

And this it was that had added to her beauty, and made her face so expressive of Christian nobility, that artists wished to perpetuate it.

It is quite wonderful how, in regard to travel, my longings have been gratified; but the most wonderful thing that ever happened to me was this—

I was speaking at a women's meeting in connection with the Congregational Union at Birmingham, and, at the close, a lady whom I knew and loved, asked me if I could drive home with her and stay a day or two. She was Miss Kirkpatrick, whose father was among the public men most highly honoured in the Midlands. They had shown me hospitality many times, and it was always a joy to be with them. Now she was practically alone. I could not return with her that night, but called on my way home next day. When we were sitting by the fire after tea, she inquired—

"Isn't your birthday next week?"

I said it was.

"Well, I am going to ask you to accept a birthday present from me—a return ticket to Palestine."

I was electrified; but presently, thanking her for

such a magnificent offer, said that I could not accept so great a gift.

She replied, "You will accept a card from any of your girls, and this would be no more to me than a card to them. Besides, I want you to go with me, for I have a great wish to see the Holy Land before I die. You would like it too, and it would help you in your work; so don't worry, but go."

Was it not lovely of her? What could I do but gratefully accept what was so gracefully and affectionately offered?

We went with one of Cook's personally conducted parties. In the company were a lady and gentleman from France, a lady and gentleman from America, Dr. Ross Taylor and Mrs. Taylor, and Dr. Hugh Macmillan from Scotland, who proved charming companions, and an Australian, who, because his forbears were Scotch, travelled all through Palestine in a Highland kilt, to the wonder and amusement of the natives and to the annoyance of the true Scots and the rest of our party. Altogether we numbered twenty. We ourselves formed a little quartette, a Welsh Presbyterian minister, Miss Brice, a young friend from Northampton, Miss Kirkpatrick, and myself. But we were altogether a friendly company. We travelled by water, starting from London, and calling at Gibraltar, and Malta.

We also paid a short visit to Cairo, where English friends met us and took us home to afternoon tea. It was little more than a glimpse we had of the fascinating land of Egypt. We found Cairo itself bewilderingly interesting, its narrow streets, shops and bazaars, its

mosques and temples. Of course we went out to see the sphinx and the pyramids, and some others of the great marvels of that marvellous land. We were much interested to find the sand of the desert so beautiful in colour, and to stand by the Nile, the mighty river of mystery. All too soon we had to join the rest of the party, travel by rail to Ismailia, and by steamer to Port Said, and so away to Jaffa. The weather was very stormy there, and it was not certain whether we could land, and indeed the act of landing was difficult. First we looked down from our big steamer and saw Cook's boats on the tossing water below. Two men, after waiting for a favourable moment, took me under the arms, hoisted me over the side of the ship, poised me for a second or two, and then let go! I found myself stumbling over the seats of the rocking boat, and heard a hearty voice greet me with, "Bravo, Miss Farningham!" This was my introduction to Dr. Hugh Macmillan. We had the opportunity of watching a similar descent of our fellow-passengers, and were afterwards swiftly taken to the Jaffa landing-stage and our hotel, the rooms of which were named after the tribes of Israel—my room, I think, was Issachar.

Our first Sunday was spent in Jaffa, and, of course, we were taken to see the house of Simon the Tanner, and other interesting places there. Next day we started for Jerusalem. The railway was partly finished, but the members of our party chose there the horses they were to ride through the whole tour. Dr. Macmillan, however, was driving, and he kindly offered me a seat in his carriage. It was a beautiful drive through the orange

and lemon groves of Jaffa, across the plains of Sharon to Ramleh, and thence over the mountains of Judea, past the site of Emmaus, along by the valley of Gihon, and into the Holy City through the Jaffa Gate. We went out on the roof after dinner to get an idea of the views. Next day, carriages took us to Hebron, the Cave of Machpelah, Abraham's Oak, and to the Pools of Solomon, where our camp was pitched. We visited the church of the Nativity, the Milk Grotto, the Shepherds' Fields, and the Mar-Saba Monastery. On Friday we rode through the Wilderness of Judea to the Dead Sea, and saw the ruined castle where John the Baptist was beheaded, and the deep valley in which are the warm baths where Herod bathed. Some of our party had a bath in the Dead Sea. While we rested a little breeze sprang up. "I don't like this wind," said the dragoman suddenly, as he looked at the sky. It was clear and blue except for a cloud "the size of a man's hand," but in a few minutes we were in a deluge. When it ceased we had to cross the Jordan on our horses, by no means a pleasant experience. Next day we went to Bethany, and walked over the Mount of Olives to Jerusalem.

One of the most memorable of our days in Palestine was this first Sunday in Jerusalem. Many members of our party went to Mass at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, but our Welsh friend said, "Let us go round about Jerusalem, and tell the towers thereof." He took his New Testament with him, and we walked up the hill, which is now generally supposed to be the true Calvary. We were resting at the top with the city spread at our feet, and Mr. Jones was reading little portions from the

Gospel, which in this locality seemed to be very real, when the sound of singing reached us. We found it was by girls from the Syrian Orphanage, and as they appeared on the slope of a hill near us it was with a thrill of pleasure we discovered that they were singing in English—

"There is a green hill far away,
Without a city wall,
Where the dear Lord was crucified,
Who died to save us all."

We went over to speak to the girls, who had sweet faces and pleasant manners, and who told us they all had to learn one foreign language, and they had chosen English.

A little later we heard singing of another kind, the wailing song of those who were attending the dead to his burial. Among the mourners was one of the servants of our party, who came across to fetch us nearer that we might gain a knowledge of the obsequies of the Arabs. The dead man was carried on a bier, wrapped in a linen cloth, his face uncovered. They had made him a sepulchre in the rock, and there they buried him, his head slightly raised. He had a very fine face, which looked serenely placid in the last sleep. After more weird singing and prayers they placed a large stone at the door of the sepulchre and left him. As for us, we had passed a morning which neither of us would ever forget.

We spent a Sunday at Nazareth, and Dr. Macmillian came to us with a lighted face and a hand full of flowers. "See, these are daisies and buttercups! *He* played with the very flowers which our children pick—daisies and

buttercups!" It was from this no doubt that Dr. Macmillan got the idea for his book "The Daisies of Nazareth." Mount Hermon was a grand object in all our views for several days. From Nazareth we went to Tiberias. The tents were pitched beside the beautiful lake, and we went out in fishing-boats. Our American friends said, "Cook ought to place a nice little steam-tug on the lake, instead of these big, old-fashioned flat boats." I was so glad he had not! We watched the brown-skinned men taking their meal of bread and olives, heard them talk to one another and sing, just as when Peter said, "I go a-fishing," and one of the boatmen looked as if he might be Peter himself. What a time that was! Memory and imagination did glad work. We, too, sang when the boatmen did. I can at times recall the voice of my friend, Miss Kirkpatrick, in Thring's hymn, "Fierce raged the tempest," especially in the last verse which she led—

> "So when our life is clouded o'er,
> And storm winds drift us from the shore,
> Say, lest we sink to rise no more,
> Peace be still."

The doctor at Tiberias told us that it would not be safe to remain there, we must get away, or we should all be ill. So we started for the highlands of Naphtali, the waters of Merom, and the slopes of Hermon to Damascus. We were all feeling strangely tired when we reached the beautifully situated city, and saw the rivers of Pharpar and Abana, and the gardens filled with lovely blossoms of peach, apricots, and almonds. Excepting that no one felt well, we enjoyed our visit.

We walked "the street that is called Straight," and saw the spots around which legends have gathered. Then we left Damascus, riding through orchards of vine and fig trees, and up the north bank of the Abana, in the delightful shade of the walnut trees to our camp, which was pitched among fruit trees at the foot of a high mountain. Next we rode to Baalbec, the wonderful town of ruins, and had lunch near the Temple of the Sun. Then we drove over one of the slopes of Lebanon to Beyrout, a fine modern city, at which our tour came to an end.

I had been feeling very anxious in regard to my friend's health since leaving Damascus. Our longings now were for home. Interesting as Beyrout was, we were disappointed to find that we had a day to spare there. Our dragoman, however, said that a small Russian steamer was starting for Port Said at once, and we might travel by it. We did so, and had an interesting experience, watching the Russian peasants at their work and worship. At Port Said we were told that we must wait several days for our own special boat to England, and that we had saved nothing by coming on. Then we were near despair, for my friend was very ill. But suddenly I remembered that as I left London, Mr. Cook had given me a personal letter addressed to his agents everywhere, directing them to come to my aid in any way I required. The result was satisfactory. I asked the manager of Cook's office to read the letter, and we were despatched that night in one of the best steamers.

I have been thankful for that ever since. What

would have happened if there had been delay? My friend just gained the comforts of her peaceful home and the company of her relatives in time. Her doctor pronounced the illness a case of virulent typhoid, and she lived only a few days. As she was nearing the end she several times sang parts of the hymn we sang on the Sea of Galilee—

"The wild winds hushed, the angry deep
Sank, like a little child to sleep,
The sullen billows ceased to leap
At Thy will."

Her death was a great grief to me, and a loss to many. She was most philanthropic and good, supporting by her gifts those societies especially which aimed to help girls and women, the afflicted and the hopeless. To her friends and companions she was merry and gracious. On one of my visits I found that her carriage had been named "the omnibus," because there was always room in it for all sorts and conditions of friends. Dear Janet! you are greatly beloved and missed still.

For myself, I could not bear, for a long time, to think or talk of Palestine. It seemed all too dreadful! The only way to bear it was to try to push back memory and feeling. I cancelled all engagements I had made to give lectures on the Holy Land, and felt as if I should be glad to remember it no more.

But of course this state of feeling should not last long, and I knew that it would grieve her if she could know how I was behaving. It was good to remember that her wish to see the Holy Land was granted, and that she had thoroughly enjoyed it until nearly the end.

I felt sometimes as if she were saying to me, "Peace, be still."

So I am glad and thankful to have been to Palestine. It made the Bible so much more interesting as I went on teaching it in my class, and selecting mottoes from it for my verses. I wish every Church that could would do for its pastor what my friend did for me. But to get out of it what is possible, he should go while he is well and strong. Jerusalem and Damascus are not health resorts.

The whole country in which Jesus lived is like none other to those who know and love Him, and is still a land of milk and honey to those who hunger and thirst for Him.

I was often warned that I should be disappointed in Palestine, but I was not. The land seemed full of Him who trod its slopes, ministered in its cities, and healed its people. And there were always the mountains to see, beautiful for colouring in the lights of the mornings and the days. I count among my rarest experiences the early morning rides across the hills and through the fields of that sacred land.

Four years after my tour in Palestine I had a very bad attack of influenza, and was a long time recovering from it; indeed, the effects lasted from December to June. Then the doctor issued a pleasant prescription: "Switzerland! Not its valleys, but the hills on which the snow lies." Some friends and neighbours, who are not less dear because they are among my latest, and whose kindness has comforted me often, had already received the same doctor's behest, with the addition that the gentleman was to "breathe glacier air." They kindly

invited me to join them, and other friends elected to do the same. We were a happy party of seven—three married couples, and an odd old woman whom they all spoiled.

So we went through sunny France to Switzerland by vine-clad hills, with glorious views of the fine mountains, from Pontarlier to Lausanne and the lake of Geneva, to Zermatt and the Riffelalp, with the grand Matterhorn close to us, and far away in the valley the mountains of the Bernese Oberland, with the exquisite Jungfrau robed in spotless white. We concluded our holiday among the snows at the Eggischhorn, from which more than a hundred mountains can be counted, and which look down upon the largest glacier in Switzerland.

Our most adventurous journey was after we had been to Chamounix. We were staying at Martigny when the captain of our expedition said, "This is my eighth visit to Switzerland, and I have never seen the Hospice of St. Bernard. We can manage it very well this time."

It was quite early in June, and we were a little afraid that the pass would not be open, but we all wanted to see the Hospice of St. Bernard, as who does not? So we went. We had a wonderful drive along the valley of the Rhone, and afterwards through grand and exquisite scenery, but depressingly dirty villages. The sun shone till we reached Liddes, and exchanged our horses for mules and narrower carriages. At Cantine, a lonely inn on the road, we had some refreshments, and soon after we came to the snow, and our troubles began. We were told it would take us three quarters

of an hour to get through the snow, but it was a toilsome journey of at least three hours. The snow was very deep, and our clothes were speedily saturated and heavy to walk in. A severe snowstorm came on, which made things worse, and as we waded through it, with nothing but wastes of snow around, and the sound of the torrent running underneath, and the scarcely marked track becoming terribly steep and difficult, we understood the need there was of a hospice. We could not see the refuge, however, for a long time, and our strength nearly gave out. I am afraid I caused my friends some anxiety. "I would not have brought you here for five pounds," said our captain. Half an hour later he put the sum at ten, and I kept going up in value, till at last he said, "I would not have brought you here for fifty pounds if I could have foreseen this." Another friend, my neighbour, roused me in another way. He was always ready with remedies, but at last he said, "Pull yourself together if you can. They charge an awful lot of money for carrying a corpse over these lines, and, however expensive it would be, the Northampton people would never forgive me if I did not take you home to be buried!"

We all laughed at that, and the laugh did us good. Presently, when there was only a little bit more to climb —a very steep bit though—the foremost of the party, scrambling, slipping, panting, mounted it, and summoned aid for the odd one, who was triumphantly chaired into the hospice!

We were most kindly treated by the monks, and impressed by their heroism and goodness. All that we saw

was most interesting, and we felt repaid for our trouble, especially as it was fine next morning, and the descent was so much more easy than the ascent. We were glad to have seen St. Bernard under such realistic conditions, and thankful to find ourselves none the worse for our experiences.

CHAPTER XIII

EDITOR OF *THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TIMES*

WHEN we were all young and merry together, two friends and I used to sing a humorous song, the first line of which was "I'd be a heditor." It is curious that two out of the three have been editors for many years, and the other a constant contributor to literature.

It was toward the close of the year 1884 that Mr. Clarke asked me if I would be disposed to take the editorship of *The Sunday School Times.* The request was supplemented by the strongly expressed wish of Mr. James Greville Clarke, the eldest son, in whose care the journal had chiefly been.

This came upon me altogether as a surprise, and I asked for time to consider it. Mr. Clarke, in order to help me to a decision, pointed out what would be my new duties, the time it would probably take me to perform them, and the amount of the remuneration he could offer. I did not at that interview mention the doubt which was uppermost in my mind, for I have frequently been too cowardly to speak that which I had courage afterward to write, so I took home with me, unuttered, that which was the question of questions, Should I be required to leave Northampton, and live

in London, in order to accomplish the work? After thinking it over and consulting my friends, I wrote to Mr. Clarke and submitted my difficulty to him. I reminded him that my sister and her family and my brother had now settled in Northampton, and that my Bible-class was as large, as important, and as precious as ever, but said that if he thought it necessary for me to reside near the office of *The Sunday School Times* I would do as he wished.

He replied that he would not like to take the responsibility of uprooting me, that he thought it was not absolutely essential for me to be in London, that large, strong envelopes could be made to carry papers, and that there was a post between Northampton and the Metropolis. I was very grateful for this concession, aud at once accepted the position, for which I was to receive an extra £50 a year.

With the New Year, 1885, I commenced my new duties. There was a portrait of me in the first number which I wonder did not frighten away half the subscribers at one fell blow, and an Editorial Address, part of which may be copied here.

"*SUNDAY SCHOOL TIMES*, Jan. 2, 1885.

"It is not without some trepidation that the writer of these words adopts the editorial "we, and appears in a new character before the readers of *The Sunday School Times*, nor without a great desire that the acquaintance which long ago commenced between us may be strengthened and cemented by the change. It is more than a quarter of a century since we, with others, were consulted as to the need and desirability of a cheap little

paper that should be an acceptable visitor in the homes of the people, and a sympathetic helper of Sunday school teachers and scholars. Penny papers were multiplying rapidly at that time, but a halfpenny one was a rather new idea. The Rev. Jonathan Whittemore, the originator of *The Sunday School Times*, however, believed it to be a good one, and foresaw that it would be a success. The paper was started, and at once made room for itself in the crowded world of literature; and, notwithstanding the smallness of its size, and the quaintness that has always characterized its appearance, has managed not only to hold its own and live on, but to grow in favour and gain in power and influence. There were associated with its originator, the present proprietor, whose articles did much for the success of the enterprise, the lady whose excellent lessons and articles still enrich our columns, and the writer of this paper, whose name has not, we believe, been absent from a single number of *The Sunday School Times*. There were also Mrs. Worboise, Miss Welsh, and other writers of beautiful stories connected with the venture. Twenty-five years have availed to change some of the workers and to take some to their rest. Happily a new race of writers has sprung up, and our readers will bear us out in the assertion that the last year, which has seen the largest circulation, has also been the best in the history of the paper as regards the interest and value of its various articles. We are exceedingly anxious to maintain the present standard of excellence, and for this reason are hopeful that familiar names will still be found in our columns; and that the chief worker, Mr. Clarke, whose name has not appeared, but to whose watchful oversight and thoughtful selection we have all been indebted, will give us his help.

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"It remains for us to commend ourselves to the kindly reception and good words of our friends. We have at least one qualification for the new post, for we have grown grey

in the service of the Sunday school. A long and intimate acquaintance with the responsibilities and possibilities attaching to this sphere of Christian work has so endeared it to us that we trust it will be the last of all the life tasks to be laid down when the evening shadows fall, and the night, when none can work, is at hand. If before that time we may be enabled to say a few cheery words, and render a little assistance to the younger workers, it will be indeed a source of profound thankfulness. Nor are we less desirous that as *The Home Educator*, which it has always been, our paper may have before it an enlarged and a useful ministry. We want it to be a friend cordially received, warmly recommended, and well beloved; and in the confidence that it will be, we have the pleasure to wish you, most sincerely,

"A Very Happy New Year."

It may be imagined that I was exceedingly anxious that *The Sunday School Times* should be in no sense the loser by its having passed into my control. When it started first it had no competitor, but now there were several in the field. The times, too, had changed. Friends of the young were desirous of introducing into Sunday schools better methods and higher ideals. The day schools had vastly improved during the last quarter of a century, and this made the work of Sunday school teachers in many ways more difficult, and also more important. A comradeship with teachers was, and always had been, almost a passion with me, for was I not one of them? I had had some preparation for my editorial work, for I was fortunate in having a wide personal knowledge of Sunday schools, north, south, east, and west, in cities, towns, and villages, and I knew

and loved hosts of their teachers. As was always the case with me in any new attempt, I did not feel at all sure of achieving success, but I meant earnestly to try. So I looked my task in the face as cheerily as if it had been a veritable Cape of Good Hope!

Many kind congratulations and good wishes reached me. Those which came from the Sunday School Union made me especially happy. *The Sunday School Chronicle* had been for eleven years in existence, and was largely circulated side by side with our *Times*. The editor, Mr. Benjamin Clarke, was the first to send me a greeting, and a welcome into the ranks of those whom I had afar off regarded as kings—the worshipful Company of Editors. Several of the secretaries and other officials also strengthened me with kindly expressions of goodwill. With the Sunday School Union I have been associated always, and have been excluded from no part of the great and unique services which the society has rendered to the nation. To all their festivities invitations are sent to me. How many of their meetings I have attended I should be afraid to count, and often have I read papers or spoken for them. I have had a place on their committees, and I am a member of their council, having been first elected to the position by the local Sunday School Unions of Northamptonshire. I was therefore glad that the editor of *The Sunday School Chronicle* and I, though in some senses rivals, were in every sense friends; as I believe has been the case with succeeding editors.

One pleasant recollection I have is that of attending the centenary of Sunday schools, when the Earl

of Shaftesbury unveiled a statue of Robert Raikes, the founder. Large numbers of delegates were present from the United States, Canada, and every part of the world in which Sunday schools had been established. Canada sent up twenty-six visitors, and the United States no fewer than a hundred and ten. I had the honour of being one of a little group who stood by Sir Charles Reed when, as President of the Union for that year, he received and welcomed the guests. It was rather a wet evening on which they arrived, and the first question he put to them was, "How do you like our climate?" They appeared all to love it, and everything else that was English, so glad were they to find themselves in the old country. Never was there a happier time than we all had together. Every speaker at every meeting was a Sunday school enthusiast, and the racy speeches of the Americans, the devout prayers and songs of the Germans, the brotherly pride of the Canadians, and the cordiality of the French were all charming. We held high revelry in London for about ten days, and then continued it in the provinces. Among the notable events were a concert at the Albert Hall, a grand day at the Crystal Palace, and a Communion Service at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. I think no one who attended this service ever forgot it. Between two and three thousand members of Christian Churches of various names forgot their differences and joined in the Communion. About thirty foreign delegates and leading representatives of Great Britain were on the platform and assisted in the service. Mr. Spurgeon's greeting was, "How glad I am to see you present! We

are met together first of all for Communion with the Lord Jesus Christ, and next for communion with one another." The service commenced with the hymn, "Come let us sing the song of songs." Dr. Todd of New York, Mr. John Wanamaker of Philadelphia, Vice-Chancellor Blake of Toronto, and the Hon. A. Vidal of Sarnia, Canada, engaged in prayer, and Pasteur Paul Cook followed with a prayer in French. Mr. Spurgeon's address was a very characteristic one. "Our theme to-night is Jesus, and nothing else but Jesus," he said. "Dear brethren and sisters, you have nothing else to teach that I know of. I almost wish that you were as ignorant as I am, for I know nothing else, and when I get to the end of the Gospel I am spun out. I know no more, and have no wish to know more. I determine not to know. I am a know-nothing." After the bread and wine had been handed round, and a collection taken on behalf of the Continental Sunday School Mission, Mr. Spurgeon suggested that the whole of the vast congregation should join hands and form an unbroken chain, extending from the floor to the platform, and from the platform to the galleries above, and sing the last two verses of Cowper's hymn—

"E'er since by faith I saw the stream."

It was not quite easy to link together such a tremendous chain, and it might easily have been ridiculous, but Mr. Spurgeon's tact, and the deep feeling in the hearts of that magnificent company of Sunday school teachers, really made it altogether sublime.

The tone of all the various meetings wherever they

were held was a high one, every speaker feeling the greatness of the occasion. Women took part in them as well as men. Miss H. N. Morris, of Brooklyn, gave a most interesting address on "Methods of Teaching," lighting it up with suggestions in regard to illustration. She told the teachers that certain laws had been laid down for their guidance. They were so to approach the famous town of "Man-soul"—as Bunyan quaintly quoted it—through ear-gate, eye-gate, mouth-gate, or, in other words, through the senses, that the child would be able to grasp the truth; that is, apprehend it, approve it, and accept it. I find from the Memorial Volume that Marianne Farningham gave a short address:—

"The great schoolmaster of Sunday school teachers is Life—the Spirit of God teaching them through their life. It is quite possible to become too bookish. It is better to be a man and a woman in a class than to be the best book ever written. Give your own lessons and not other peoples.' Do not lose your own individuality, and so strive that the great lessons life has taught you may be helpful to you in your classes. We are all working men and women—we all have to work by head or hand or both. Whatever our trade or profession it will teach us something; it will help us in Sunday school teaching. Let us have our eyes, ears, and hearts open, and give to our scholars that which life has given to ourselves. For instance, the experience of one might be this, 'I have had a great sorrow this week; the sorrow has been sent to me by my Father. How can I use it in my class—not speak about it, of course—but what has it taught me, that I may teach my scholars better?' Another might say, 'I have a great joy. How can I turn that joy to good account in my class?' Or again, 'I have a new thought—new thoughts are not so many,

we do not get them too often at all—every new thought comes from God; let me treasure that thought, and give it to my class.' Our successes, our failures, our mistakes, our troubles, and even our worries, if we only know how to use them, may be made of good account in our life work."

Many kind invitations to visit their country were given to me by friends from America, especially Dr. Vincent and Mr. Wanamaker. They assured me that I should receive a hearty welcome there, and promised to pass me on from city to city and from home to home, and give me a "real good time." But Dr. Clifton, for many years my friend and medical adviser, to whose care and skill I owe much, would not give his consent, and I did not dare to go without it. The Rev. Arthur Mursell and others who had experienced life and work in the United States also dissuaded me from the idea, one going so far as to declare that if I went to America I should not come back alive. I quite believe that I could have gone, either then or later, when appointed a delegate to the world's great Religious Assembly. But my friends were not willing for me to run the risk, and therefore I have never seen the Sunday schools of America, though much wishing to do so.

The work of editing *The Sunday School Times* gave me plenty to do, and greatly increased as the years went by. As far as I could, however, and as much for the sake of the journal as anything else, I continued to attend Sunday school meetings occasionally. One of these is very fresh in my memory. I had promised to read a paper at the annual Conference of the Gloucester and Hereford Sunday School Union, when a tempting

invitation reached me from friends to accompany them to Rome. I told this to the committee of the Union, and asked them to allow me to alter the date of my visit, but they rigidly held me to my engagement. I am afraid that I went to Ross instead of Rome in a rather unholy frame of mind. But it was a very happy time that I had there. My paper was called "The Nation in the Sunday School." I was obliged to read it twice, as there was an overflow meeting. It was afterwards printed in *The Sunday School Times*.

After a year of work upon the paper, some of my troubles had begun. In a leading article I wrote—

"We take this opportunity of thanking those correspondents who favour us with original compositions, and at the same time ask their forbearance. It is impossible to return all unsuitable communications, especially when, as is often the case, no stamps accompany them. Our friends should themselves keep copies. Also we find it necessary to state that manuscripts intended for the printer should be written legibly, and on one side of the paper only. We are compelled, too, to ask if it is not a little unfair to send us copy which writers have not taken the trouble to read over and correct. This of course refers only to a few, but we shall be glad if the few will take the hint."

From the first I was astonished at the number of authors who wished to contribute to our columns, and every year these have greatly increased. At the present time the serials, short stories, sketches, articles, and poems submitted to the editor, average over five hundred a year. It is this sort of thing, and the enormous

number of letters it represents, that makes an editor's work difficult and strenuous.

As to our International Lessons we have been exceptionally fortunate. For several years they were written by the Rev. Samuel Cox, D.D., author of "Salvator Mundi," "The Bird's Nest," etc. When, at Mr. Clarke's suggestion, I wrote to ask him to do so, he replied, "It is a great honour to teach those who teach others, and I shall be pleased to conduct the Teachers' Class of *The Sunday School Times* for a year." This was a great gain to our journal, and to thousands of teachers who gladly sat at the feet of so able an expositor. Dr. Cox lengthened his one year of tuition to three, after which, to our great regret, he was compelled to relinquish the task. For a while the Rev. Howard James stood in the gap. At the present time, and for several years past, we have had another great teacher of teachers. Principal Adeney writes for us what I consider are the very best International Lessons of this, or any other country. The help he has rendered to our teachers has been, and is, of the very highest type; and we know that it is most gratefully appreciated.

It did not appear wise or necessary to make any great change in the conduct of *The Sunday School Times* when it was passed over to me. I thought it might be desirable, however, to give one page to the children, and believe that the little readers in many homes have enjoyed this. The short sermonettes by the Rev. J. C. Carlile have, I know, given much pleasure. For nearly five years the experiment of a monthly competition was conducted by "Aunt Patty," my youngest

niece, and this brought shoals of letters in the big, round handwriting of the children that one loves.

I have twice tried to get up a Teachers' Correspondence Class, but have not succeeded. Many have appeared quite willing to correspond with me, but not about their work, excepting only a few.

Many persons subscribe to *The Sunday School Times* who are not connected with Sunday schools, but who are our very firm friends all the same, regarding the journal as a magazine for the family, as indeed its second title declares it to be.

I was asked at the beginning of things to keep in mind the Home as well as the School, and have tried to do so. Our short stories and serials have been prominent features, and we have had among the writers of the latter such good names as Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, whose fascinating story, "A Singular Life," delighted every one, Margaret Scott MacRitchie, Emma Raymond Pitman, Eglanton Thorne, G. Holden Pike and Blanche Atkinson.

It has never been in my power, though often have I wished it were, to become a good writer of hymns, or a novelist. Referring to a story of mine that had appeared in *The Sunday School Times*, a publisher once took my breath away by saying, "You know you have no style." Yes, alas! I knew it only too well, and I wished that more time had been left me in which to develop a style. As it was I did my best, and in the columns of *The Sunday School Times* inserted two serials, which were written with a very earnest purpose.

The first was called "1900? A Forecast and a Story," but the title fails to express my meaning. I did not expect that which I foreshadowed to occur in one year. It ought to have read "1900 and—What?" for my hopes were, and still are, that some time during the century, though possibly late, and gradually, the character of English life may be raised to the high estate which I tried to describe. But I am afraid that nothing has come of it. One newspaper indeed said that it was "a worthy contribution to a very great subject," but it was one of the disappointments of my life. I am perhaps half a socialist. One of the people myself, my sympathies are frequently with them, and I long and pray for a future which I shall not live to see, when the workers will live under better conditions, and take their share, because they understand and value them, in the higher pleasures and pursuits which have for so long a time been the exclusive privileges of the favoured few. My story did have a little influence. And better days are coming, for have I not seen the growth of libraries and reading-rooms, garden cities, and better sanitary conditions? Whether or not I added one impulse to the general trend in this direction I am very thankful for what is being accomplished.

The other story, "A Window in Paris," was written in the interests of peace. Always I have had no sympathy with war, nor any faith in its true efficacy. I remember that once, after delivering my lecture, "The Hush and Rush of Life," a lady came towards the platform and said to me—

"You are so utterly and entirely a woman of peace,

that you will scarcely care to shake hands with a soldier's widow. My name is Havelock."

"Ah, Lady Havelock," I said, "you honour me greatly. But you must know more than most of the awful results of war."

"Yes," she said; "but some grand results follow battles, and many soldiers are fine men."

I agreed with her, and as I looked in her face I caught a momentary glimpse of the beauty and strength which may be outcomes of sorrow in the life of a soldier's wife.

The reason why "A Window in Paris" was written was that I had so unique an opportunity of learning many particulars respecting the Franco-Prussian war. Mrs. Clifton-Crick and her husband, a literary man, lived in Paris during all the terrible time of the siege and the Commune. Through mutual friends I made the acquaintance of Mrs. Crick and her daughter, and heard the story most graphically told. Of course I wanted to write it, as everything else I saw and heard during those busy years; and that I might be better able to do so she made room for me and my niece, in her house, and we spent some time in the gay city, which appeared rapidly to be recovering herself. Mr. Crick did not long survive the sufferings and privations to which he had been subjected, but Mrs. Crick lived to a good old age—a wonderful woman with a marvellous memory. Her daughter, Mary Clifton-Crick, was in Germany during those awful years, but she lived with her mother in Paris now, and became to me a dear and honoured friend. They have, alas! both passed away, but the time

spent with them, listening to the story of the tragic events that were enacted near them, was one which I shall never forget, and memory calls before me the room in the pleasant flat where I wrote the chapters which were soon after inserted in *The Sunday School Times*. It was in the autumn of 1896 that I wrote the story; it was published in *The Sunday School Times* in 1897, and in book form during the following year. This was one of the events, and I had many, that gave zest to my work as an editor.

It was only natural that, being interested in all young people, I should be particularly glad to be in association with young writers. They are always hopeful subjects, and their first attempts are frequently full of promise. A young writer's first endeavour is warm with fresh love and imagination. I see now, sometimes, in other magazines and journals, quite familiar names of those who sent me their early productions, perhaps a little timidly; but, after a time, thinking they could do better, they betook themselves to fresh fields and pastures new. I am, I think, a little proud of those who began their journalistic life with me, and then took the next step up the ladder. God speed them.

At the beginning of 1898 when, happily for us all, Professor Adeney began his series of Talks on the International Lessons, *The Sunday School Times* was printed in new type, and was therefore the more worthy to carry the good thoughts and words that were entrusted to it. There have been many of them. Our contributors have been a large band, numbering several hundreds,

but they have been bound together by a strong chain of good will. I am glad to take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation of the excellent work they have done, and the spirit they have put into it. They have understood and respected the tone and intention of the journal. We have worked in almost absolute harmony, and the ruling spirit of our community has been that of trust and peace. It is not an easy thing to be an editor, but it has been more easy to me than to many, because those who have worked with me have been friendly, good-tempered, and kind.

I have felt it to be an honour and a privilege to have had the conduct of this little paper for so many years. It is a favourite with its readers. It is a friend whom they know and love, and they do not weary of it, even though the years pass and other aspirants for their favour arise. Everybody seems to agree that it is a wonderful little paper for the money, and I certainly think so too. I am comforted to believe that it has not lost its position during these later years, since it became my responsibility and joy. It has been my earnest desire that it should be a minister in the home, a teacher of teachers, a companion for the young, and as I know it has been in many cases, a recognized friend of the old. Letters from all parts of the world have come to me acknowledging the help received from it. I little expected so long to have the health, strength, and ability to keep my post, but we get our lessons one by one, and strength as we need it. God trains His servants while they work, and when we try in simple

faith to "do the first thing," He makes the next clear to us.

And now, at the end of 1906, I have for twenty-one years been the editor of *The Sunday School Times.*

CHAPTER XIV

SORROW AND JOY, WORK AND REST

A GREAT loss fell upon us in the spring of 1888 by the death of Mr. James Clarke, the proprietor and editor of *The Christian World*, in the 64th year of his age. He had been ill for more than a year, but he wrote in his own genial style a New Year's address to the readers of *The Christian World*, which was then entering upon its thirty-second year. Until only a few days before his death it was hoped that he would recover, but heart weakness rapidly increased towards the last, and the sad news was proclaimed to the world that his work was finished.

Mr. Clarke's personality was very striking; his warmth of heart, his kindly disposition, his unfailing courtesy, his courage and faithfulness to conviction, were as marked as his journalistic genius. To know him was to love him. From the office boys to the heads of departments he was regarded with affectionate esteem and reverence. I felt it a privilege, as did every one, to work under a man who was so sensitively regardful of the feelings of others. He loved to have his contributors about him. His beautiful home at Caterham was a very happy one, not only to his own family, which consisted

of three sons and three daughters, but to many who enjoyed his friendliness and hospitality. My visits, while the family was yet unbroken, were delightful times. Afterward, when most of the young people were away in homes of their own, the lawns and the library were still winsome places, but when the master died there was a great blank over all, and although I still visited Beechhanger, and had some peaceful days and lovely drives over the Surrey Downs with Mrs. Clarke and her sons, who were always good to me, Caterham could not be quite the same again.

It is impossible to estimate the far-reaching influence which, through *The Christian World*, Mr. Clarke's religious convictions had upon the times in which he lived. He loved truth and exalted righteousness of every kind. He believed in the free expression of opinion, and in fearlessly facing the problems of the age. He was not afraid of that which was new, and though there was great reverence in his nature, he did not hesitate to attack any dogma merely because it was old. His own faith seemed always beautifully sincere and simple, and its outcome was a brave and blameless life. To have personal talk with him was to desire earnestly to have for one's own the larger hopes, and wider outlook, and deeper insight which characterized him ; to think more generous thoughts, and to be afraid of nothing but that which was wrong. Often have I wished that those who said bitter things of his theology could have known the real man.

I have frequently seen him pained by the cruel things that were said of him at the time when Mr. Spurgeon

denounced *The Christian World* and all its followers as on *the down grade*, but Mr. Clarke was too brave, and his convictions were too strong, to let him be turned from his purpose. The advanced views advocated in *The Christian World* no doubt lost some subscribers, but I do not think they cost Mr. Clarke a single friend. I was travelling to London with him one morning, when Mr. Spurgeon's head suddenly appeared over the division which separated us from the next compartment.

"Hullo, Clarke; how are you?" he shouted. It was delightful to see the two men grasp each other's hand in true brotherhood, while at that very time a fierce theological war was going on between them. Mr. Spurgeon presented to Mr. Clarke in 1865 twenty-two volumes of his sermons, with an autograph letter of thanks for aid rendered.

There was a time when Mr. Clarke was urged to publish a *Daily Christian World.* He talked to me of it, but said, "I am beginning to be afraid of that which is high. This morning, opening the Book, and letting my eyes rest on the first words that met them, I read again that wonderful description of the time when 'the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men bow themselves'; also 'when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way.'"

"But you are not old," I said.

"No?" he queried, with a smile. "Well, I believe in the immortality of the soul."

No, he did not remain with us long enough to grow old; but what a magnificent work he accomplished before he went to sleep, and left to his sons their great

heritage of opportunity and responsibility—a trust which they assumed with absolute fidelity!

Mr. Clarke was a born editor. He realized the greatness of his calling, and his whole soul was in the work to which he was sure that he had been appointed by God. He was like one of the men of Issachar who had "understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do." Even those who did not agree with all his opinions yet gave him honour for the great goodness that was in him, and the faithfulness of his life and work.

For several years before his father's death, Mr. James Greville Clarke, the eldest son, had practically edited *The Christian World*, so that there was no great change in the paper when he became the editor-in-chief, assisted by his youngest brother, Mr. Herbert Clarke. Neither did it make any difference to my position. From the first I was treated by Mr. James with the same kind courtesy and sympathetic consideration always manifested by his father, with perhaps an added gentleness and regard to mark his appreciation of the difference in our ages. Never did workers receive from their masters more graceful recognition than I.

Early in the following year, 1889, I had a rather serious break-down. This was, I think, the result of anxiety and trouble, as well as the quantity of work I was then doing, which was considerable. The previous year was a very dark one to me, and those who were my dearest. My brother had gone to South Africa some years before, with my sister's husband. The latter had been, for some months, in all his letters, expressing an earnest wish that my sister should go out to him and

when he sent the necessary tickets it seemed right that she should. Naturally she had felt his absence very much, and was herself far from well, and as we all hoped a change would do her more good than anything, we brought ourselves very reluctantly to face the parting. Her eldest daughter and I went to London to see her off by the boat. It was Lord Mayor's Day, and as dreary as November could possibly be. When we reached home a letter awaited us containing the sad tidings of the death of my brother; and the first thing I had to do was to break the news to his only daughter, who was staying at my house, and afterward to his wife and son.

My sister had taken her two youngest boys with her. One of those left behind was in a situation at Rushden. After my sister had been on the water a very few days, news came to us that this boy was ill. It proved to be a very serious case of typhoid fever, and we were afraid, after hearing the grave opinion of the doctor, that the first news we would have to send to his mother would be that of his death. But God was good to us, and spared one, who, to our comfort, remains with us to-day. Of course these anxieties and troubles following one after another proved a great strain on heart and nerve.

In February, 1889, I went to Sheffield, at the request of my friends, Mr. and Mrs. Bramwell, to give a lecture on behalf of either the Sunday School or Temperance Society in which they were interested, for, although I had given up lecturing as a profession, I occasionally delivered one for special purposes. When the evening came on which I was to do this bit of work I had become very unwell. Seldom before had I broken an engagement

or failed to do that which I had undertaken, but I thought it was impossible for me to speak to an audience that night. However, my friends did all they could for me, and we drove down to the chapel. Again in the vestry I became very faint. Some sal volatile and a scent-bottle restored me a little, and I went to the platform in the hope that I might be able to speak. For some time a cloud seemed to rest on the people, and I could not see them; but fortunately I could see my manuscript, and in a half-blind, dazed way I went through it. But I was ill again at the end, and my friends were naturally alarmed. The next day, with the same loving kindness which I have often experienced, they took me to Grange, and to a hydropathic establishment for treatment. It was so unusual for me to feel ill, however, that I was afraid this attack would prove serious, and as soon as possible went home and consulted my own doctor, feeling sure that he would understand my case and help me.

Dr. Clifton said that I was suffering from overwork and brain fag, and that unless I had an immediate and lengthened rest, I might consider my life-work done. He wrote to Messrs. Clarke stating the fact, and giving his opinion that there would remain yet some years of service in me, if now I took adequate rest; but without it there would be an utter collapse. They were, of course, extremely kind, and offered me a respite of more months than I wished. Mr. Percy Clarke, the head of the great publishing business, told me with kindly humour that it would be no use for me to send contributions to *The Christian World*, for they would not be

inserted, for at least three months. So there was nothing left for me to do but take the first real holiday I had had since commencing my literary engagements. Plenty of travel and change had fallen to my lot, but hitherto I had always taken my work with me, never failing to tell my readers where I was, and what I saw. Things were now made beautifully easy and pleasant for me. My eldest niece, Miss Sharwood, known to the readers of *The Sunday School Times* as R. E. S. T., undertook to edit the paper, and I knew that I was leaving it in good hands. The lady who had been my friend and companion during my lecturing tours, knowing of the great longing I always had to see Italy, suggested that I should take this opportunity of going, and offered to accompany me at her own expense. Mr. Clarke had left me a legacy of a hundred pounds, and I thought I could not more wisely use half of it, than in trying to become well and strong in order to continue to serve the papers in which we had been associated.

That I needed a holiday was quite certain, and I think perhaps I deserved it. Almost without a break, I had for thirty years, week by week, contributed regularly both prose and verse to the two papers *The Christian World* and *The Sunday School Times*, increasing in quantity as the years went on, besides frequent stories and articles to the *Christian World Magazine*, *Happy Hours*, and other publications. A few weeks ago I looked through some old volumes of our journals, at the British Museum, and was really amazed at the output of my pen. It made me a little tired even to recall those years of work. The wonder was that the

breakdown had not come at some previous time during the thirty years. But I had not realized how hard I was working, because the work to me was so intensely interesting, and I loved it so much.

In the kitchen of my little birthplace at Farningham, one winter's evening when I happened to be alone, I, being then fourteen years of age, by the help of an atlas and a gazetteer, mapped out a tour through Italy, which now that I was over fifty was to become an accomplished fact. The very thought of its possibility began to make me well. It was too delightful. The head of one of the great tourist agencies offered me special terms to travel in their personally conducted party, but that was the last thing which I wished to do, or that would have been good for me. We went by our two selves, and under no other conditions could the holiday have satisfied me so completely. My friend spoke excellent French, which carried us happily through. My knowledge of the language is comprised in *oui* and *merci*, but her use of it in France, Switzerland and Italy proved adequate to all our needs.

We started on our delightful holiday in high spirits, and with the good wishes of hosts of friends, spending the first night in Paris, and the second at a little wayside inn at Culoz. Next day we reached Turin, so making our first acquaintance with Piedmont, and getting a beautiful view of the Monte Rosa chain of the Alps. Turin is a fine city, and as it was the first we saw in Italy we were duly impressed. I knew nothing about pictures. Art was to me a closed book, but the most ignorant person could not visit Italy without receiving

more knowledge than all the books of the world could give, nor without being awakened to admiration and reverence. The walk through the city charmed us exceedingly, especially the Piazza Carlo Emanuele, with its fine monument of Cavour. But we knew there were better things to follow, and without lingering in Turin, hastened on to Genoa, the beautiful city of marble, on the Italian Riviera. We arrived during a thunderstorm, and found the Mediterranean looking as black as ink. While my friend attended to the baggage I ran along what seemed an interminable line of omnibuses, with the names of their hotels prominent in large lines upon them. They all looked very foreign and strange, until I came to one which bore in big letters the words, "Hotel Smith." That was comfortably familiar and English, so we took our seats in it, and were soon, with our belongings, driven away to the harbour, and settled in the hotel. The next day and during the whole of our stay we had Italian weather, brilliant and beautiful, and we were able to see a good deal of the city, its delightful old palaces, its grand shops, its magnificent promenades, and the interesting life at the port and in the markets. From Genoa, we went to Pisa, that wonderful old city of the leaning tower, which everybody wants to visit. It was less high than I expected to find it, and we climbed the two hundred and ninety-four steps, in order to get the fine view which is seen from the summit. The cathedral was still more wonderful, with its fine nave and aisles, and the whole building of white marble with black decorations. It has very fine, bronze doors, and another door of the twelfth century exhibits

representations of twenty-four subjects from the Bible. There is a bronze lamp hanging in the nave which is said to have suggested to Galileo the idea of a pendulum. It is of Galileo one thinks most at Pisa, it was from the top of the leaning tower that he made experiments in the laws of gravitation. We also visited the Campo Santo, and saw its paintings and sculptures, a wonderful burying-place indeed. Its founder, Archbishop Ubaldo, intended that the dead of Pisa should rest in holy ground, for he had fifty-three ship loads of earth brought from Mount Calvary.

On several occasions we got some fun from our fellow-countrymen. While we were dining in the hotel at Pisa a gentleman told us that we should by no means miss Siena, and that we should arrange to be there on Easter Sunday, and stay at a certain hotel, the name of which he gave us, because it was the only place he knew in Italy where we could get lamb and mint-sauce!

But even that urgent reason did not suffice to prevent us from keeping our resolution to spend Easter in Rome. It was a wonderful ride we had along the coast of the Mediterranean, and still more wonderful it seemed when we arrived, and heard the officials at the station crying *Roma, Roma,* and so realized, with a thrill of delight, that we had reached the city of dream and desire.

We were met at the station by Mr. Shaw, a Baptist missionary from England, who had secured rooms for us in the Via Sistina, and who, with Mrs. Shaw, showed us much kindness during our stay. What it was to wake up the next morning actually in Rome! We

were out early, in the delicious air, which seemed positively intoxicating. I had the same feeling every morning. I could have wished myself a boy, that I might throw up my hat and dance for joy. We meant to spend in all about three weeks in Rome, but would not have found three years too long in which to see all its wonders as they should be seen. I cannot pretend to write about Rome, that would require nothing less than a whole book, written by a far abler pen; neither can I put into words the feeling with which I and my friend saw the walls and the stones, the churches and the villas, the museums and the galleries. To walk by the Tiber, to stand in the Forum, to see the basilicas and temples, the arches and the baths, to stand on the Palatine Hill and the Capitoline Hill, is, certainly, like nothing else in the world. Our friend Mr. Shaw took us through those marvellous ruins, and he was a kind and wise guide, for he knew all about them. For ourselves we were silent through wonder, and the imagination itself was baffled in trying to realize only a part of what this Roman Forum meant. We felt as if we could only take a little of old Rome at a time, and indeed, as I look back, it seems that we scarcely began to see it. There was too much for eyes and brain to comprehend, and the wonder of it all was too bewildering. Of course we spent Easter Sunday at St. Peter's. But if I were to go to Rome a dozen times I would keep away from that marvellous cathedral on that day. It was crowded, chiefly with other people than the Romans. Americans largely predominated, Germans were there in full force, and a large contingent of

English people. I was grieved at the great lack of reverence and courtesy in some of them. In one part of the service a group of men speaking our language, were talking and laughing during most of the time. I was glad to hear an English woman say to her daughter, "See, my child, these people are kneeling. Let us either kneel or leave the church. All this is very real and solemn to them, although we cannot understand it." The Pope did not appear on that Easter Sunday, and I confess that both St. Peter's itself and the Easter service in it were among my disappointments in Italy. The church is so enormous, the tombs of the popes are so predominant, that in order to see St. Peter's as it really is, some quiet hours must be spent in it. Afterwards we did justice to it and other beautiful Roman churches.

I am afraid that as long as I live I shall not cease to regret that I have not been able to pay a second visit to Rome, with leisure to write my impressions as they came to me. There was no necessity for me to do this. The world has so many books on Rome that it could not be the gainer for one by Marianne Farningham. But my own personal joy in doing it would have been great.

Some memories I keep, however, which are of priceless value to me in these quieter days. A long morning in the Sistine Chapel is one of them. The wonders of that twenty months' work by Michael Angelo, the marvellous roof, and the side walls, on which are the gems of other painters, the altar of mother-of-pearl, ivory, and tortoiseshell, remain with me

like a beautiful dream, only too elusive. Then there was the colosseum, that great work of the captive Jews whom Titus brought from Palestine, the grandest of all the Roman amphitheatres. It was quite easy as we stood within the colosseum to lose ourselves altogether, and feel that we were in another world and another age. It was illuminated during our stay, but we did not care to see it lighted by gas, or hung with Chinese lanterns; somehow that seemed to our minds incongruous, remembering the martyrdoms which those old walls had seen. It was very interesting to examine the plants that were growing in the walls, many of them, we were told, quite unique, and I am glad we saw the colosseum before, by modern order, it was cleared of all its flora. We saw the Mamertine Prison, and the Catacombs, and had a drive along the Appian Way. We also saw the fountains of Rome, but omitted to drink of the water of Trevi, though we were told that those who drank it were certain to return to Rome!

Naples was the next city which we visited. It did not delight us as Rome had done. We were unfortunate in our hotel; the weather also was not very kind to us. There was little sunshine, but intense heat, and as for noise and dust they oppressed us exceedingly. On returning from one short drive we looked like dusty millers. We went out on that beautiful bay to visit Capri, and see the Blue Grotto. We should have liked to stay at Capri, the most enchanting spot of the western Mediterranean; it is no wonder that artists love it. We had a guide, a good-looking Italian boy with wonderful eyes, who told us that he could speak

Engleesh, and show us the fine views. I thought it would be pleasant to have things explained in our own language, so we engaged him—and discovered that he had already uttered all the English he knew, excepting "very nice," and "good-bye."

We travelled by rail from Naples to Pompeii. We did not call at Herculaneum, not having time for everything, but it was strange to hear the name shouted by the porters as our train came to a halt at the platform. We spent a night at a small hotel just outside the city of Pompeii, and in full view of Vesuvius. I do not think we slept much. We had a feeling of being almost out-of-doors. We could not fasten ourselves in, and during the night the glow of the mountain, which was in slight eruption, was much too fascinating to allow us to close our eyes for long together. At seven o'clock in the morning we were admitted, and began our walk through the streets, having entered by the Porta Marina, stopping to look at the Temple of Apollo, the Temple of Jupiter, with its triumphal arch, the Macello, the market for provisions, and the Temple of Mercury. We went into the great theatre, in which five thousand spectators used to be accommodated and witness the plays. It was early in the spring when we were there, but we could imagine that the awning, which was put over it in the summer, and the water which was sprayed to keep the audience cool, must have been most acceptable. It was not difficult, by the aid of our very intelligent guide, who spoke excellent English, to picture the scene, though now only the lizards inhabited it, and instead of the grand dresses which decorated the seats

were lovely tufts of maidenhair fern. It was wonderful to see the dwelling-houses of the people as they were when that awful rain of ashes and pumice-stone buried them—the grand house of Marcus Lucretius, the shoemaker's shop, the Villa of Diomedes, where, two thousand years after the catastrophe, eighteen skeletons were found of inmates who had been suffocated; the proprietor, with the key in his hand, being discovered near. One leaves Pompeii with the conviction that there is nothing more remarkable to see in the whole world.

We resolved to drive to Castellamare and Sorrento. We were told that we could have "a horse and a half" to take us, the meaning of which curious information we discovered to be that our carriage would be drawn by a big horse and a little one. It was a most charming drive, especially the part from Castellamare along the coast road, between the five mountains on one side, and the beautiful Bay of Naples on the other, to Sorrento, the most delightful bathing resort of Southern Italy.

After a short stay there, we left the south, with a sigh that we had come to the furthest extent of our tour, and must now turn our faces northward.

We called at Rome on our return journey, spending more happy days, but not enough to satisfy us. The mother of a former member of my Bible-class was living in the city, and she kindly became our guide. Among the pleasures of this visit was the opportunity of becoming acquainted with those heroic workers in the Holy City, Mr. and Mrs. Wall and their family. Never shall I forget a meeting of beggars which I attended, and which was conducted by Miss Wall; they were so

poor, dirty, and wretched, and she was so tender and compassionate. Another incident which delighted me was that on Sunday evening I visited a hall in which were held services in English. I was very glad to find that Dr. Barnardo was the preacher. He took for his text, "Ye belong to Christ." A few years before I had made his acquaintance at the house of a mutual friend, and it was very good to see and hear him again.

From Rome we went to Perugia, and gained a little insight into the paintings of the Umbrian School. At Perugia we were quite near to Assisi, to which most interesting place I allowed my friend to go alone, to my never-ending regret, if not remorse. I was so tired that it seemed to me more desirable than anything to take a couple of rest-days. I did not know so much about Assisi and St. Francis then. But when she talked to me of what she had seen, and later when I read more, I would have given anything to have another chance. But it has never come to me.

From Perugia we journeyed to Florence the Fair, and the greatly beloved.

Florence more than came up to our anticipation, and we spent a week among its glorious wealth of beauty and art. Our first visit was to the Baptistery, with its wonderful bronze doors, declared by Michael Angelo worthy to be the gates of Paradise. We ascended the Campanile, the Shepherd's Tower, and saw as far as we were able the work of "the great and dear master" Giotto, the story of whose life and achievements is more fascinating than any novel. We spent indescribable days in the Uffizi and Pitti palaces and picture galleries.

The hours were golden that we spent in the churches, Santa Croce, Santa Maria Novella, and the monastery of San Marco, having our eyes delighted and our hearts stirred by the masterpieces of Fra Angelico, and recalling memories of Savonarola. With Ruskin's "Mornings in Florence" in my hand, I went one day to the Spanish Chapel to study "The Vaulted Roof." I became so absorbed that I did not know how the hours were passing, gave no thought indeed to time, and even forgot to be hungry, a quite unusual thing with me. When at last a monk came and asked me respectfully if I could retire, I was amazed to find myself the only visitor in the church, and to see that the day was wearing to evening. I have been to Florence once since, and I advise all who can to see again and again that winsome city.

But Venice was calling us, and we might not linger, except to pay short visits to Bologna and Padua. Every one who reads at all must desire to see Venice and its wonderful waterways. It was a delightful experience to step into a gondola instead of into a cab when we arrived, and so to be taken over the silent water to our hotel on the Grand Canal. I could scarcely give the reason why, but no church that I have ever seen made me *feel* so much as St. Mark's. Whenever I went into it I was conscious of an atmosphere of old-time worship, and it seemed to people itself with the men and women of the past. The marble mosaic pavement is unique, and all the mosaics that enrich the church and the colouring of the whole place are matchless. The altar-piece of gold containing the figure of our

Saviour surrounded by angels and archangels was overwhelmingly beautiful. There was an old picture placed at the left of the altar that always brought tears to my eyes. Of course there is so much to see in Venice besides St. Mark's Square, that several days are needed to become at all conversant with its interest and beauty. The Doges' Palace, the Rialto Bridge, the long succession of marble palaces, with some of which we associate the names of Ruskin and Browning, all increase the fascinations of Venice, as everybody knows. But the gondolas on the water are a source of ever-living pleasure, the illuminations, the serenades and the concerts add to the delights of this island city. Our gondolier always pushed the nose of his black boat through the crowd that we might secure the best place from which to see and hear. But we did not feel quite like the girl visitor of whom a friend told me, who wrote a letter home saying, "My holiday is magnificent. I have spent three days on the Grand Canal, drinking it all in!"

We were more willing to leave Venice, because we were bound for the Italian lakes. "Are the Italian lakes so very, very beautiful?" I remember asking the Rev. Thomas Arnold, of Northampton, once, when he had returned from Italy. He looked at me for a moment, and then he said, "Miss Hearn, you have never dreamed of anything so perfectly, exquisitely beautiful." I did not know then that I should ever see them, but these words of his were with me always, and were more than justified.

We did not stay long at Milan, though long enough to see some of its palaces and piazzas, and especially its

fine cathedral, which we were told is the most magnificent Gothic structure in the world. We spent some time in the interior, and then ascended to the dome, and on the top of the tower, among the pinnacles, we rested for a while. The whole cathedral of white marble is dazzling in the sun, and entrancingly lovely in the moonlight.

The train conveyed us from Milan to Como, the lake of which most of us have had visions. We stayed at the Villa d'Este, where the nightingales sang to us all night, and the fireflies lighted the darkness. It is a place in which to become absolutely saturated with beauty. We visited Lugano, and ascended Monte Salvatore, from which fine views are obtained of Monte Rosa, the Matterhorn, and other Alpine mountains. From Lugano we went to Lake Maggiore, by steamer, and visited the Borromean Islands.

And now, having had a full feast of lovely scenery we left Lugano for Lucerne, travelling through the great St. Gothard Tunnel, and spending one night at Andermatt. What a change! We had been carrying our wraps through Italy and had wished them anywhere but with us, for they had never been unfastened, except to be examined on the frontier. But now we found ourselves in the region of snow and ice, and were only too glad to use all the warm things we had with us. We were a little in advance of the stream of visitors, only one hotel was open, and we seemed to have the whole village to ourselves. So we went back next morning over the Devil's Bridge to Goeschenen, and through the spiral tunnels by the Swiss town of Altdorf,

with its traditions of William Tell, to Fluelen, and thence by the steamer to Lucerne. Here we tarried for a few days, the Rigi and Pilatus full in view, until our time had nearly expired and we journeyed towards home, after calling at Paris to visit the Exhibition.

Now, I put it to my readers, whether it was not well worth while to have a breakdown which secured such a wonderful three months' holiday? It troubled me more than a little that I, whose life was spent in search for copy, should have been debarred by my orders, and promise, from using the splendid subjects which my tour through Italy had afforded me. My only communication which appeared in print during the three months of my holiday was a letter, addressed to "Our Class from its Absent Teacher." It was dated Perugia, Sunday afternoon, May 5, 1889. It began—

"My Dear Girls,—I am spending a quiet Sunday at this quaint, beautifully situated town, and as I cannot speak to you, I will send you a few words in writing. At this time you are met together I hope, in our pleasant class-room, and I have been picturing you, in your usual places, and asking that our Father may bless and make a blessing whoever has the privilege of talking to you." (I told them of Rome and Mr. Wall's Sunday school.) "The scholars of one class were men, and of another women, and of all ages, down to very young children. Mr. Wall asked me to say a few words, which he translated into Italian, sentence by sentence. This was a very strange experience for me, and I felt much more nervous than if I had been standing face to face with my own dear class. But when I had finished there was a unanimous murmur of voices, and all eyes looked to me so kindly that I knew, even before Mr. Wall told me, that they were thanking me, and expressing

their good wishes." I told the girls something of Naples, Pompeii and other places, and ended by saying, "You see I am taking a very long holiday, and I am sorry to remain so many Sundays away from you, but you will be glad to hear that I am well enough to enjoy it all, and hope to see you again in a month or six weeks."

I took some notes, and found subjects for articles and poems when my holiday was over, but I have always been sorry for the waste of so much rich material. By the end of June I was at home again, and an article appeared in *The Sunday School Times* on the "Restfulness of Solitude." But in July, a World's Sunday School Convention was again held, and I had to find other charms than those of solitude. I was glad to take up my work again, to contribute to the papers that I loved, and to meet the class toward which absence had made my heart grow fonder. But I never did quite as much work afterward as I had done before, because everybody warned me not to, although I really felt well and strong.

Perhaps the friends who care enough for me to read this autobiography will forgive another exhibition of my egotism if I say a little here about my health. In my early days there was, I believe, a legend to the effect that I was a confirmed invalid. Perhaps that was because of what one critic called my "weakly poems"! But the fact is during the years of my literary work, now numbering nearly fifty, I have on the whole enjoyed excellent health. When I was about twenty-one years of age I tried to insure my life. To my great astonishment, the doctor of the society refused to pass me. I was

very nettled and tried another agency, with the same result. Pressed to give a reason, this doctor informed me that none of the few insurance companies open to women would accept me, because my heart was not right. This was rather a blow to me on the very threshold of my career. But after thinking the matter through, and reminding myself that I was feeling quite well and strong, and with a mind to work, I resolved to tell no one about it, and certainly not to let it spoil my life. There were so many interesting things into which I wished to put my heart that I could not afford to acknowledge its weakness, and I had faith to believe it would be able to meet my demands: and I really think it rose to the occasion. I have had a good many little illnesses, but never a serious one. Once after I had been giving a lecture in Kent, and the room had been crowded, I was as usual standing outside in the cold fresh air, more than willing to speak to any friend who desired to shake hands with me. A cousin of my father's putting a wrap round me, said, "Remember that you belong to a consumptive family, and a cold is a dangerous thing for you." I cannot recollect, however, that I was specially liable to cold through all that busy time.

But what a large sum of money was lost by that insurance company which refused to accept me fifty years ago!

CHAPTER XV

MY COTTAGE AT BARMOUTH

FOR all the later part of my life I have been so happy as to have a real health resort of my own. There never was a time when I did not greatly desire to possess a cottage in the country or by the sea. During the years when it appeared as impossible of realization as to "dwell in marble halls," I used to dream of it and talk of it. What would it be, I thought, to have a little place of my own, to which I could go when I had a chance, without having to seek for lodgings, or wait for opportunity—a cot of my very own, to which I should have right of entry, and which would be like a second home! I did not mind how rough and small it was; a flat in a fashionable seaside resort, or a big house somewhere, was not in the least what I wanted; but a little crib with nothing spoilable in it, which I should not be afraid to shut up, which I could lend to my friends whose tastes also lay in this direction, was what my soul desired.

At last a friend was good enough to offer to build me a cottage in the most beautiful part of Derbyshire; and this brought the desire of my heart nearer to accomplishment. But I knew that, though the Peak District

THE BARMOUTH COTTAGE.

is lovely, the sea would be calling me even from it ; and before settling on the situation I decided to try in real earnest to secure, if possible, a cottage in one of the two most charming spots I knew. So I wrote a letter, addressed to the minister of my own denomination, at the little town which I thought I should love the best ; one's own minister I was sure would answer a request for information. The church was at the time without a pastor ; the letter, however, was delivered to a deacon. I had said that I wanted a small cottage with a low rent, such as a fisherman or labourer would inhabit, that I did not mind what it was, as I could myself make it pretty and comfortable. To my great joy, the deacon replied that one happened to be vacant, and he sent me a little photo marked with a cross to show its position. He said it belonged to " Mrs. Talbot, the kindest lady in Barmouth," and advised me to write to her agent. I wrote to the agent, and the lady too, and she consented to let me have the cottage if, after I had seen it, I wished for it. I was too pressed with work just then to go to see it, but I begged its owner to let me become her tenant at once, and she consented. A few days later some odds and ends of furniture, which had been placed at my disposal at the right minute, arrived, and my sister went up to arrange them in the cottage. She took with her a son who was so ill that several doctors had pronounced him incurable. Only one sensible physician had said that if he lived out-of-doors, and walked over hills and mountains, he might get well. And he did. When I arrived a week or two later, and he met me at the station, I knew that he would live.

What my cottage was to him, and has since been to many, I could not tell; and what it has been to me cannot be put into any words. Here have I come to meet the spring, and here have I seen the summer delayed almost until November. Here on grey wintry days, when my strength was low and faith feeble, have I been able to wait until hope and vigour returned, and here have gracious summer-times almost renewed my youth, and caused my heart to sing for joy. How much I wish everybody could have such a haven as I!

My cottage is a little gabled house, situated on a crag at the foot of a mountain, and high up above most of my neighbours' chimneys. The cosy dwelling-place is a very old one—probably two hundred years old at least; and it is built of the grey stone of the neighbourhood, fastened with cement that never seems to loosen or wear out. Guarding the ample kitchen fireplace, with its snug chimney corners, is a delightful old oak beam that must have seen several centuries. Beams are among the most characteristic features of the cottage, and they are frankly visible in each of the rooms. The walls, too, have an individuality of their own. They are three feet thick, and therefore the house is warm in the winter and cool and comfortable in the summer. It is a five-roomed cottage, two rooms downstairs and three up. The door is in the middle and opens into a passage paved with slate slabs, as are the floors of both downstairs-rooms; the staircase is opposite the door. The sitting-room is to the right as one enters. It is a pretty little apartment, with a deep dado of Indian matting, and a frieze of beautiful flowers cut for me by kind

hands from a book on gardening. Not much furniture is in the room—it is not large enough to contain much: a few chairs to sit on, a table on which to write, a sofa for rest, and an old oak corner cupboard. The ceiling, with its beams, is whitewashed, and the door and window seats are dark brown. The kitchen is the same, excepting that the walls are colour-washed.

The chief glories of the cottage are its casement windows and ample window-seats, which are comfortable, and from which are obtained magnificent views of sea and land. The windows have been kindly put in for me since I first came, now twenty years ago. The best of a cottage is that, being small, everything is compact and handy. To reach the bedrooms one has only nine steps and a landing, although the rooms are not unduly low. The sloping roofs are indeed very high in the highest parts, and even in the lowest I never knock my head, though possibly a person who was exceedingly tall might do so. Broad window-seats are here also, from which grand views of the sea are obtained, although, indeed, it is possible to lie in bed and see them. Gracious dawns and wonderful sunsets are witnessed from my windows, and as I write there is a summer glory on the yellow sands and the blue sea, such as goes directly to one's heart. What makes it such a delightfully all-the-year-round place is that every bit of sunshine there is comes to the cottage, which faces the south and west. In the winter I can see the sun dip into the sea, and in the summer, from morning till night, it stays to bless us. If we pass under the porch on to the little terrace, there are wider views. On the left the Cader Idris range and

the Mawddach Estuary, and on the right, plainly visible from my little summer house and garden, are the Carnarvon mountains and Bardsey Island. Not only do we get the sunshine, but we also become acquainted with the winds! I never knew what wind was like before I had my cottage. Sometimes at night the fact of the great thickness and strength of the walls and chimneys is a thought of much comfort. But it is a grand concert which the sea and the winds conduct together. Frequently it is awfully wild and solemn; but sometimes, as now, the winds are only at play, and the sea is singing a song of the sweetest tune.

Of course, I know that there is only one such cottage as mine in the whole world! But there are hundreds of other cottages in pretty inland villages, as well as around the coast, which would make other people as happy as mine does me. I cannot imagine why the plan is not more often tried. There can generally be found some trustworthy working woman who will look after the place and keep it aired. And the pleasure that one gets out of it is worth more than all the cost. It makes one feel quite well off to own a cottage somewhere, as well as one's own residence! And there is great delight in lending it, not only to one's own circle, but perhaps to those who still more need rest and quiet and fresh air. But it must be a real *cottage*, and plainly furnished, so as to bring no care, but only joy. As for me, I am scarcely more grateful for anything than for my cottage, Craig-yr-Helbul.

My cottage has brought me into association with several very gracious spirits, whom it has been good

indeed to know. The friendship of Mrs. Talbot has greatly enriched my life. She was almost a lifelong friend of Ruskin. When I first took up my abode at Barmouth, the two friends were playing by correspondence a game of chess together, and she used sometimes to read me little extracts from his letters, in his own most characteristic style. Mrs. Talbot was the first to respond to Ruskin's invitation to form the Guild of St. George. She had bought something like a dozen old cottages on the rock, and she presented them to the Guild. Mrs. Talbot's beneficence to Barmouth has been greater than any one knows. One of the first things I heard about her was that there was no poor and hungry person in the place, unless by some means the news of him or her had not reached the lady. One of the latest things that she has done for the town is to present to it a mountain, Dinas Oleu (the Fortress of Light). The following is the inscription cut in the rock:—

"The upper part of this cliff Dinas Oleu, enclosed by the walls of the north and the east, and by the roadway from gate to gate, on the south and west, was, in March 1895, given by Mrs. C. T. Talbot of Tyn-y-ffynon to the National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty. To be kept and guarded for the enjoyment of the people of Barmouth for ever.—*The National Trust,* 1, *Great College St., Westminster.*"

We have heard of parks being presented to towns, but such a gift as this, which cannot be spoilt by being built upon, and must remain always a height from which to view the sea and the mountains, is almost unique. Mrs. Talbot's house Tyn-y-ffynon (the house

by the spring) is filled with beautiful things, especially pictures, chiefly by her son who was a pupil of Mr. Ruskin. Some of Ruskin's own are there, and one at least of Turner's, also Ruskin's table and chair from Oxford.

Mrs. Talbot's house is a charming one in which to rest. How many times have I gone in after a hard day's work and spent an evening of ideal repose! She is a beautiful reader, and knows almost instinctively what are the best things to read. Delightful spells of intellectual enjoyment we had, often with Ruskin, sometimes with Miss Alexander, sometimes with Canon Rawnsley, and occasionally we descended to the newspaper. After a time, Miss Blanche Atkinson came to reside with Mrs. Talbot, and the evenings were happier and brighter still. Miss Atkinson, a literary woman, was especially given to Nature-study, and wrote many interesting things on trees and flowers and gardens. I was always the lazy one of the party, of quite deliberate intent. It was not my way to occupy the hours in knitting or netting, while there were the sunsets to see from the conservatory, or the lights of the candles gleaming on the pictures, bringing before me one of St. Mark's, with all the colours of its glorious marbles, or a picturesque Venetian street. When they laughed at me for being idle I retorted that I had no doubt done as good a day's work as either of them, and was entitled to rest in the evening. But, after all, nothing was so beautiful to me as the dear face of the gracious lady who for twenty years has been my friend and landlady.

It was Mrs. Talbot who introduced me to Miss Frances

Power Cobbe, whose conversation was so charming that one could have listened all day without finding it monotonous. Miss Cobbe had lived her life vividly, and knew everybody, and had especially been in the real intellectual life of London during those wonderful years, the seventies and eighties. She made history as well as lived it, for her clever pen sent through the daily press articles which roused enthusiasm for the good, and active antagonism to the wrong. She had a marvellous brain that could grasp any subject. Miss Cobbe used to congratulate me because I was still a journalist. She had herself been the special correspondent to *The Daily News* while living in Italy, and when she went to London she joined the staff of *The Echo*, supplying three leaders a week. She joined *The Echo* toward the end of 1868, remaining till the spring of 1875, during which time she wrote more than a thousand leading articles. She had friends everywhere; Mr. and Mrs. Browning, Mrs. Somerville, Theodore Parker, John Gibson, Charlotte Cushman, Mazzini, Dr. Martineau, Dean Stanley, Cardinal Manning, Mr. and Mrs. Carlyle, and Lord Shaftesbury. Miss Cobbe was always a "Woman's Rights" woman. In conjunction with Mrs. Fawcett and others she worked actively to secure the passing of the Married Women's Property Act and the granting of university degrees to women. The service which gave Miss Cobbe the greatest satisfaction was that which related to the passing of the Act granting to a wife the power to obtain a decree of judicial separation from a husband convicted of an aggravated assault upon her. Miss Cobbe obtained statistics which convinced

her that about fifteen hundred cases of aggravated assaults on wives took place every year, and that these women were compelled by law to cohabit with their brutal husbands and work for them. It was a happy day for Miss Cobbe when the Bill, which had been brought in by the House of Lords, passed the Commons. Miss Cobbe never lost touch with women. I heard her in 1890 at Birmingham, when in connection with the National Union of Women Workers she read a paper on "Women's Duty to Women." As I looked around on the great company of well-dressed women, chiefly young, I wondered if they knew all that Miss Cobbe had done for our sex. But as soon as she entered the door the whole assembly with one accord rose in respectful greeting of this pioneer woman worker, who had shown so many of them the way. She was much touched by their evident admiration.

It is well known that she was the originator of the Anti-Vivisection Society. Hers was the honour of making the first direct effort to arouse public thought in regard to the moral questions involved in the torture of animals, and this was done by an article which set many great minds thinking, and whose title was "The Rights of Man and the Claims of Brutes."

Miss Cobbe's home at Hengwrt was a grand old mansion standing in beautiful grounds, with a singing little stream running through it. It was the property of her lifelong friend, Miss Lloyd, with whom she spent many happy years, and from the sorrow of whose death she never really recovered. She, herself, passed away quite suddenly early one spring morning in 1904.

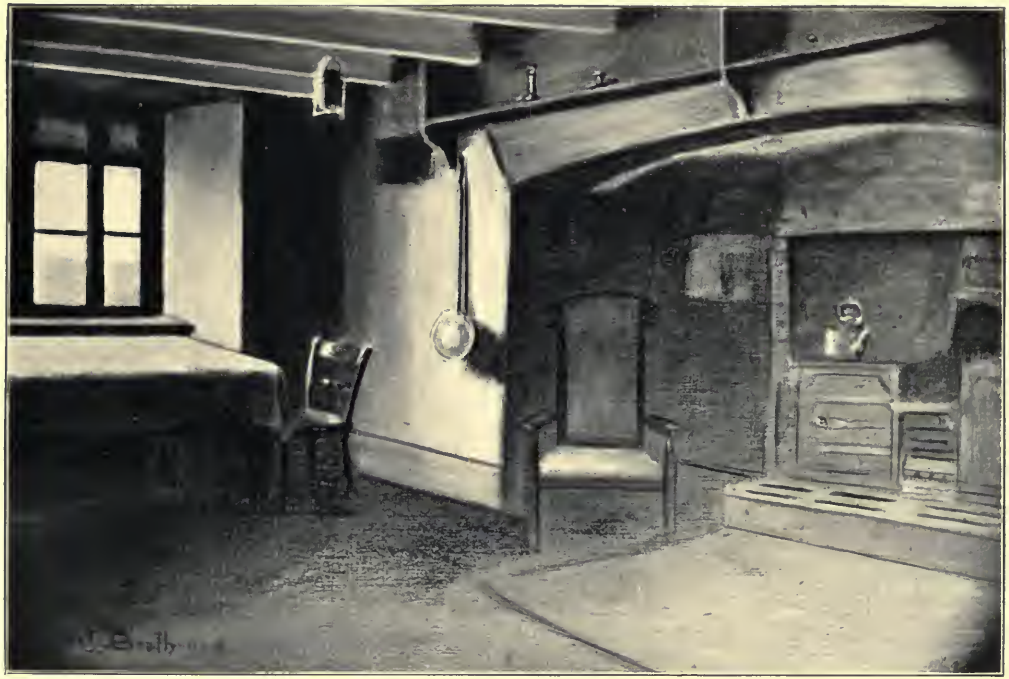
She had lived and thoroughly enjoyed her life of eighty-two years.

Miss Cobbe had an excellent library, which she bequeathed to Barmouth, on condition that the books were suitably housed, and a building of the stone of the neighbourhood had been erected to receive them. Miss Blanche Atkinson was her literary executrix, and she had appointed a small company of directors to take care of the books, of whom I was one. Of course the presence of this library has made Barmouth dearer than ever, and I am glad that it is being appreciated by others.

More even than these books could be to me is the scenery of this part of Wales. It is not too much to say that on the hills above my cottage my soul is absolutely satisfied with beauty. When I am tired of hot, dusty streets, or chilled by wintry fog, and get too hungry to bear myself, I come up to Barmouth, and invariably get a full meal. I and my niece have spent several winters here, and made the acquaintance of the birds that in large numbers have found their way to our little terrace, and even into our windows. One stormy year the gulls came too, but the robins are our most faithful friends, and sing to us the most regularly. Some of our winter days are almost like spring. I have more than once written my verses for *The Christian World* out-of-doors in January. The autumn is very beautiful. These are some notes that I made in October, 1906:—

"The October tide is coming in, the sea sending little white waves in advance which the sun catches and silvers

over, as they run up the rocks and across the sand. I find the wind is in the east, which I could not tell before, for the mountains shelter my cottage. The sun shines on the faces of the grey rocks, and lights the brown bracken and the golden gorse which never fail Barmouth. The heather has not lost all its colour, and I could gather an armful quite near. It makes a lovely glow behind the pines on the distant hills. The ling is white or cream coloured, and there are wonderful effects of lights and shadows on the mountains. In the sweet-scented ivy blossoms clinging to a wall the bees make melody. As I mount the hill everything that is beautiful is spread about me. The sky is most lovely blue, having the pale moon still hanging in front of it. There is a hawk poised in the air over the Garn, and the little birds hastening away and talking to each other about him look down upon me as I sit sheltered by trees, which in the glen look almost as green as ever. But who could describe it all? Certainly not I. And though it is the autumn of the year, and the autumn of my life, there cannot be a happier, or more thankful woman than I am this morning, on God's beautiful earth."



THE COTTAGE KITCHEN AT BARMOUTH.

CHAPTER XVI

THE GROWTH OF GREAT CAUSES

A WATCHER is sure to see many notable things. Some of these would probably have been unheeded by me, but that I was obliged to look out for topics on which to found my copy for the week. The search for subjects naturally helped to develop my powers of observation, and life and the world have been far more interesting in consequence. I am glad to have lived in such years as the last fifty, during which so many good causes have been born, and have grown to maturity. If in any way however small, by pen or speech, I have been permitted to render service to any of these, I am sincerely thankful.

The times have indeed been marvellously rich in scientific discoveries, but I think they have been scarcely less wonderful in religious and social ideas and developments. One of the most remarkable instances is furnished by the Salvation Army. I can remember its beginnings. A young Methodist minister, who had drawn upon himself the rebukes of the elders because he would not be kept in the old grooves, was resolved to try new plans for the conversion of the people, and therefore separated himself from the rest of the workers and was talking

about drums, and out-of-door addresses, and military uniforms. Some good people spoke hot words of blame, and others smiled indulgently and believed in the new movement not at all. But the young general, seconded by his wife, one of the most saintly and gifted heroines of the century, proceeded to get together a company of devout and energetic men and women, all of them young, and to make of them soldiers of the cross. They were to utilize and sanctify the military spirit. The recruits were to be well disciplined, and the high qualities of obedience, courage, and fortitude were to be developed in them. There was no difficulty in securing volunteers, and the Salvation Army became an accomplished fact, though nobody dreamed, not even the general himself, of the mighty possibilities of social good which were, for the time, dormant.

The methods of the Salvation Army encountered fierce opposition. Northampton was not worse than other places, but the flaming posters about fire and blood aggravated the people intensely; and the old general can scarcely have forgotten, even in the wonderful successes of later years, his first visit to the metropolis of boots and shoes. When he alighted at the station he was met, if I remember rightly, by the Vicar of the Parish Church, who had in true Christliness, offered his hospitality, and who was to bring him into the town in a carriage lent for the occasion. He was also met by a menacing excited crowd, who smashed the drums, and tore the banners, and mauled the general himself, trying to drag him from the carriage, which was considerably injured in the fray.

But the intrepid general of the new army did not therefore despair of Northampton ; it was not his way. He soon came to the town again, and brought Mrs. Booth with him. People were sorry for what had been done by a few of their neighbours, and the crowds were no longer hostile. Barracks were in time built for the accommodation of the speakers and the multitudes who came to hear them. Mrs. Booth was a little nervous the first time she came. I had the privilege to sit near her on the platform, and to listen to one of her sweetly characteristic addresses. A man at the back of the hall said something discourteous, and there was a slight disturbance which appeared to alarm Mrs. Booth. I was able to assure her that there was no danger of an uproar ; it was only that her admirers were proposing to turn out a man who had ventured to object ; and she went bravely on with her discourse. There has always been a corps of the Salvation Army at Northampton. I have often passed little groups in the streets or squares carrying banners, and raising their voices in song and prayer, and have wished them God-speed as I passed on to my own chapel. A member of my Bible-class became one of the captains, and did excellent work in her native town and other places. The Church Army, in time, adopted similar plans.

A great cause, which has grown marvellously during the last fifty years is, as all the world knows, that of Temperance, in which naturally I have been interested.

During the seven years of my lectures the change was especially marked in regard to this matter.

Although my hosts seldom took wine, it was, at the beginning of my course, often seen upon the table ; but toward the end of my lectures it was almost never present. Happily in these better days young ladies are ceasing to sip champagne at balls and parties, cyclists, footballers, cricketers and tennis-players seldom touch intoxicants, and no man bent on winning a prize would now seek to brace himself with wine. I am glad that Bands of Hope are still a power, and especially glad for the temperance scientific lectures given in schools. Also it is a pleasure to find so many persons engaged in supplying temperance drinks for summer and winter, though here there may be still need for further developments. I did not give any lectures directly on the topic, but served the cause perhaps quite as usefully by putting a word on the subject in them all, for I knew that many would not attend to hear a specific temperance lecture, who might be drawn by such a subject as "Help-meets and Hinderers."

I was, in a sense, at the birth, in this country, of "The Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour," of which I first heard at Crewe. I saw at once some of the possibilities of this remarkable movement. It supplied the "missing link" between the school and the church which had been often sought. I was not prepared for the immediate and enthusiastic reception accorded it in England, and was only afraid that our insular conservatism might prevent it from being seriously considered. My fears were groundless, for the idea was welcomed on almost every hand. Not

that it was accepted quite without demur. The Pledge was in many quarters objected to, especially that part which required members to be present at every meeting and to take some personal part in it. But one minister after another thankfully adopted the Society as the best method that had been conceived of keeping the young people in attachment to the church in whose Sunday schools they had been already taught, so the Christian Endeavour Society spread over England with astonishing rapidity, particularly among the Free Churches.

The story of its birth was a very fascinating one, and it was repeated so often in journals and magazines that many thousands of minds must have seen it as in a picture: A young minister, tired with his Sunday's preaching, dissatisfied and anxious because so many of the young people who listened to him seemed to get no further; his wife sympathetic, and full of solicitude; and a few earnest young people who had come into the pastor's residence for a little talk after the service. Then the illuminating flash, as surely straight from God as any message sent to a prophet of old, and the kneeling little company consecrating themselves to the work of carrying out the new idea.

In such ways the greatest forces of the world are born! How great this was those who thus quietly commenced it could not have foreseen. For a little while Dr. and Mrs. Clark tested the plan, but it was not a thing that could be hidden, nor a secret which any wished should be kept. In the Churches of America it was to a very great extent immediately adopted, and when the news of it reached England, no time was lost in putting it into practice.

What it has done for our Churches, and for the religious life of our country, it is impossible to say. Of course it has not been equally successful in all cases; success depends very much upon the leadership of a Church and its pastor. Many thoughtful men and women raised certain objections—that it was too emotional, and devoid of teaching, a fault which in later years has been to a great extent remedied; that it brought young people into prominence at an age when they ought to be unseen and unheard; that it was likely to encourage a profession that might easily be insincere and exaggerated; and that it would take young people too much away from their homes. All these evils might occur unless the societies were wisely managed by competent leaders. In cases where they have been left to the young and inexperienced, or to others with more prejudice than faith, they have naturally failed; but in thousands of instances they have strengthened the Church by preparing young people for membership, and many ministers have expressed to me their appreciation of the movement, and their thankfulness for that which it has accomplished. Certainly I have not heard any other plan suggested which appeared more likely to accomplish the objects which the Y. P. S. C. E. has in view.

I am glad that from the first I believed in it, and tried to help it. I was still lecturing when the new society was started in England, and at once added an appreciative paragraph to my manuscript. As soon as I ascertained facts respecting it, I wrote articles upon it for *The Christian World* and *The Sunday School Times*.

When it had grown into power, and had reached the anniversary stage, I began to receive invitations to speak at the meetings, which, whenever possible, I accepted. I think that no audiences have given me such perfect delight. At first there were no junior societies, and therefore the gatherings were chiefly of youths and girls in their teens—the very flowers of our country and our Churches. To look upon their bright young faces was an inspiration, to listen to their singing was to make one's heart glad with hope, and even to write in their text-books was a pleasure, though often it left me with an aching hand. The name of the society was happily chosen, and I generally began my addresses with "Young people of the beautiful name."

When Dr. and Mrs. Clark came to England the first time there was joy in the hearts of multitudes, nor have their subsequent visits been other than times of rejoicing. I was present at their great festival at the Alexandra Palace, though able to do very little except enjoy the sights and hearings, for it was too big a thing for me. Still the memory of the thousands of young people and their reception, when the Rev. Carey Bonner introduced me to them, is one which I shall cherish to the day of my death.

And that great World's Convention left another reminiscence which gives me much pleasure always. Mr. W. T. Stead invited a large number of friends to spend a day on the Thames. He sent us tickets to Windsor, where luncheon was provided, and carriages to take us to the Castle. He had hired a number of steam-launches, in which we had the happiest experiences

of our beautiful river. He arranged that at the locks we should exchange from one boat to another, so that we might have opportunities of making acquaintances with new friends, and delightful talks with old ones. Dr. and Mrs. Clark were there of course, and the author of "In His Steps," and Mrs. Sheldon, and nearly all the leaders of the Christian Endeavour movement. The editor of the *Review of Reviews* gave us a royal time, and two pictures impressed themselves ineffaceably on my memory—the one of a select company perched on tables and chairs, and standing wherever there was a foot of space, all gravely listening while our host talked to us of spooks; and the other of our landing, when Dr. Clifford having moved a vote of thanks to the generous host, sang "For he's a jolly good fellow."

The Young People's Societies of Christian Endeavour have, I believe, done much for the civic and religious life of the nation. They have kindled and cherished many loving attentions and ministries to the poor and the sick. There are lonely old widows unable to attend public worship, to whom the visits of Endeavourers on Sunday mornings or evenings are a veritable means of grace. It should never be forgotten that Endeavourers are active temperance workers, and among people of their own age are often valuable recruiting agents. In many churches and chapels they have commandeered a "Christian Endeavour Pew," into which they invite the wayfarers of the streets. But best of all, they are being educated into Christian citizenship; they will soon possess the franchise, and it is very sure that their votes will be given only to good men and great causes. The Christian

Endeavour Society is worthy of the best support of the best men. Let them not be weary in well-doing.

Another movement which I have watched with deep interest is that of the "Boys' Brigade." Naturally I had been grieved by the sight of lads playing at pitch-and-toss on the common, or lounging at the corners of the streets, using language that shocked one's ears, and as rough and rude as they could be. Too old for school, and amenable to no authority, they were a menace and a terror. When, therefore, I heard that a gentleman in Glasgow had discovered a method of reducing these lads to order, and making of them respectable and well-behaved citizens, my first thought was that I would go to Glasgow and see this strange sight for myself. But I could not do so at the moment, and soon heard that Mr. Smith, the organizer, had been invited by the Sunday School Union to come to London and tell the story at one of the meetings.

He was much more enthusiastic than the delegates and the council whom he addressed. He had chosen, as had General Booth, to utilize for purposes of discipline, certain military phrases and distinctions. Military drill was one of his great points. He wanted the lads to develop the soldierly bearing, to be obedient to their captain and officers, to be prompt and regular in their habits. Mr. Smith gave a fascinating description of the change which he had seen come over a company of street arabs of the worst type, and said he had faith in the movement that it would not only make manly and self-respecting men of the lads, but also lead them to personal reverence for Christianity.

But the delegates at the Sunday School Union would have none of it. They were afraid that the Boys' Brigade would strengthen the military spirit, and that there would be only a short step from the Brigade to the army. Sunday school teachers, as a body, hate war—though some of them forgot themselves years later, when the Boers issued an ultimatum—and one after another of the delegates denounced the new movement.

Mr. Smith listened with what patience he could to his critics, and then he was asked to reply to them. He began by saying, "Gentlemen, I have never listened for an hour to such arrant nonsense in the whole course of my life." It was evident from the reception given to this first sentence that there were present in the Old Bailey Hall some sympathizers with him and the Boys' Brigade, but not many. A large majority was against it, although it was, of course, left for individual superintendents and ministers to adopt or leave it as they chose.

The Sunday School Union improved upon the idea, and in time instituted the Boys' Life Saving Brigade, which has been generally accepted by Sunday schools in various localities. The Girls' Life Brigade is capable of development, and useful lessons in swimming and nursing occupy a week-evening in some places. The Church Lads' Brigade is having good success, and doing much to make disorderly boys courteous and brave. When I first heard of the camping-out idea it startled me considerably, but the boys' camps have long ago become popular, and there is no doubt that the association of Christian gentlemen with youths on the

threshold of manhood has had a marked and most beneficial influence upon the latter.

I felt, as did many others, that it was a national disgrace when Mr. Benjamin Waugh began to declare it necessary to form a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and especially when he boldly added that the worst and most cruel offenders were parents. That fathers and mothers should cease to care for their own children and deliberately cause them suffering seemed at first incredible. I knew that there were a few inhuman monsters, but I did not believe they could be many.

At one of the great religious assemblies, held, I think, at Leicester, Mr. Waugh's name was on the programme. I was not able to be present at the beginning of the meeting, and, finding the chapel crowded, was going up the gallery stairs when I met a friend coming down looking very white and faint.

"Go back," she said; "Mr. Waugh is saying such terrible things. It is too dreadful of him to exaggerate as he is doing. The stories cannot be true; they have made me quite sick. Pray do not go."

"But I think I ought to hear what he is saying."

"Do be persuaded," she said. "It will make you ill."

And it did.

Nothing has brought me so nearly to despair of my country as the revelations which have been made through this society. The only solace has been that the lavish gifts which have supported it have made it possible so to punish the brutal offenders as to make them afraid to

be cruel. But that such a society is still required should make us all ashamed.

In the Sunday School world I have seen some very happy advances. It can no longer be asserted that present-day Sunday school teachers are an ignorant set of people who teach nothing worth learning, as used frequently to be said thirty years ago. Many have been educated and trained. An enormous quantity of Sunday school literature has been published, of which those who were earnest availed themselves. Sunday school methods have been sharply criticized, and criticism has been a means of grace. Preparation classes have been instituted, and so many periodicals have published lesson helps that only naturally perverse and incompetent persons could help giving fair lessons to their classes. Perfection is not yet attained, but at last friends at Birmingham have instituted a Sunday School Training College for the all-round training of teachers, at which the study of child life is to take a prominent position, and which is to be a School of Method.

Great efforts are now being made to induce teachers to be careful not to teach children that which they will have afterward to unlearn, and to be less resentful of Biblical criticism than formerly. Principal Adeney has for years been working in this direction, and showing in his own lessons for *The Sunday School Times* the kind of teaching which is safe and wise—for which thousands of teachers are thankful. As a class they are very conservative, and afraid of that which is new. But some at least are learning not to be panic-stricken

though they should be obliged to readjust some ideas in regard to theology. A gentlewoman who has been many years a teacher of an adult class said, "When some startling theory is uttered in my hearing I stay my soul in tranquillity by remembering our Lord's words, 'I have many things to say to you, but ye cannot bear them now.' May it not be that He is saying some of these many things at this time? I am sure we need not be afraid of any truth."

There has lately been a contest over the International Lessons which have held their own for many years, in probably ninety out of every hundred of our Sunday schools. Individuals, however, in most schools, and these among the best educated and cultured teachers, have grown impatient of the selection, and Dr. Peake voiced this feeling in articles produced for *The Primitive Methodist Leader*, and reprinted in book form. The Professor himself came to a meeting of the Sunday School Union, and expressed his views with so much logic and earnestness that he appeared to convince his hearers; but old loves are strong. Among the American visitors who attended the World's Sunday School Conventions in Rome were some of the leading members of the International Committee, and they came to London to meet the British representatives in a Conference which lasted several days. At the close of the Conference, at a reception held at the Old Bailey, it was decided by an overwhelming majority of delegates from London and the country that the Sunday School Union should continue the International Lessons. There is, however, to be an attempt at grading; and it is certain

that there will be some needed modifications of the system.

I am thankful to have watched a wonderful growth of respect for the child. Children are among the chief assets of the nation, and now that they are regarded in this light a good deal will be done for them. It is time. The death rate among infants of tender years has assumed such alarming proportions that not only philanthropists but statesmen are bestirring themselves. Something is wrong with a people any of whose children are sent breakfastless to school, and England will not much longer bear this disgrace. Parents who are able to keep the little ones in comfort, and do not care to do this will be compelled, and the children of those who are absolutely unable to feed them will be fed by the State. Or the happier way may be taken, and every man willing to work be given work to do at a living wage, and be able to provide necessaries for his own family. New laws may be less lenient to the lazy good-for-nothings who are too frequently in evidence, and more mercifully protective toward the men who endeavour even though they fail. Legislators will consider more than ever the rights of the little ones of the country, and pass better laws for the children's sake. And so, in the greatest reform of this land of reforms it may be that once more the little child shall lead.

CHAPTER XVII

RELINQUISHMENTS

THE last chapter of every lengthy life has to be a story of givings up, and in this I have to record losses that almost meant poverty to me.

On Christmas Day, 1891, my sister returned from South Africa. She was ill with heart disease. Some of us went to Plymouth to meet her, and keep her where the climate was a little more warm than the rest of England, and therefore more like that of the Cape. It was, on the whole, a mild winter, and March brought us some days that were like those of May. She ventured to visit her son who lived in Cambridgeshire, but the weather changed almost immediately, and in place of sunny days came frost and snow, and east winds. She had an attack of bronchitis and was ill for the rest of her life. God was good to us, and we were able to keep her for a year. But in June, 1893, the release for which she longed came. Her sufferings had made us willing to let her go, and when death touched the dear face and brought to it the expression of absolute peace and content, there was a ring of thankfulness in the voice of her eldest daughter, as she said, "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

The loss of the last member of my own family, and the one who had more than any one loved and cared for me was, and is, a sharp pain to bear, but I am thankful that she "rests from her labours and her works follow her."

My sister left me a priceless legacy in her girls, some of whom have lived with me, and made my home life happy for many years, while others visit me often, and my brother's only daughter, our singer, spends part of each week with me.

In 1899, Northampton had a severe loss in the death of the Rev. John Turland Brown, who was for fifty years the minister of the College Street Baptist Church, and who lived his long serviceable life of distinguished ability and character among his own people. Born at Bugbrooke, a few miles from the town, he was known throughout the county, and beloved and reverenced not only for his eloquent and powerful discourses, but for his brave and benignant life. His influence was a force for righteousness and his support was given to every good movement.

"If John Brown takes the chair we are sure of a good meeting," was often heard in the town. He was genial and full of humour as well as of devotion. He was strongly imaginative. He loved the country, and his sermons were often thought out during his long walks through woods and fields, where he could think and pray at his best. Christ was all to him; not one of His sayings recorded in the Gospels but some time or other formed a text for one of Mr. Brown's sermons. For those whose cry was "We would see Jesus," it

was well to attend Mr. Brown's ministry. What his prayers and sermons did for me I could never adequately tell. I am afraid my silent petition before the service had very little variety in it. "Send me a message through Thy servant on which I may write my verses this week." Nearly a third of the subjects on which I wrote verse, whether for *The Christian World* or *The Sunday School Times* must have been, through all my best years, given to me as I sat in my pew in the chapel.

The last time I saw Mr. Brown, his wife had just died, a beautiful lady, a gentlewoman of rare sweetness whom it was a privilege to know and love. Mr. Brown asked me to write an account of her life. I said it must wait a little because I had accepted an invitation from one of my kind friends, and his, to go to Switzerland as her guest. His face brightened. "How good that is," he said. "Give my love to her and her sister. Have a happy time together, and when you return come to me quickly." The day after my return was Sunday, and he died that day.

Two years later there was another death which left a deep sense of loss, that of Mr. James Greville Clarke, the third editor of *The Christian World* under whom I had served. His death brought dismay as well as sorrow into the hearts of every one who had been privileged to work with him. He was so good to us all, and he was so young to die! When he told me in the office of that which was coming, all I was able to say was, "It cannot be! It is too bad to be true." He smiled, and said with quiet serenity, "I wanted to tell you myself because

you are my friend, and such an old friend to us all, that I have probably only six months to live."

Mr. S. R. Crockett, his intimate friend, wrote of him—

"James Clarke belonged to the Encouragers, who make the wheels of the world go round. I always quitted him in better heart of my own work, which as every writer knows is more than half the battle. Not that he praised it—I hardly ever remember that he did that; but his words, low spoken and few, remained long in the memory. After he had gone there was no record of brilliant sentences and concocted phrases in my mind—that was not his way—but somehow the world was a better place because I had spent certain hours with a good man."

This was exactly my case. When a fit of depression seized me, and I began to fear that what I wrote was poor and useless, and I myself too old to keep on, a chat with Mr. James Clarke always heartened me, for he laughed at my fears, and sent me back to my work with hope, and resolve to try again to do what I could.

I think his best and most brilliant sentences were spoken in his own home. His talks with his mother, when she was old, were as full of wit as of love. He was a man of few words. When he had to take the reins of government we had no talks over things; but he stepped to my side, as we stood at his father's grave, and took my hand in a clasp which said more than a book of words could have done, and told me all I wanted to know. Gentle, considerate, quietly appreciative, though always a little diffident and reserved, he was a

true gentleman whom it was a joy to serve during the time—all too short—while he was the head of the firm.

Two brothers were left, Mr. Percy Clarke, the present head of the firm upon whose shoulders the business responsibilities lie; and Mr. Herbert Clarke, the present editor.

It seems a strange circumstance that I should have outlived three editors, including Mr. Whittemore, the first; but it is plain proof that my working day is one of many hours, and that my evening is lengthened. I am very thankful that it is so full of peace; thankful, too, that I am still able to continue, though with less eager pace, the work that I love.

It was in the beginning of the year 1901 that I had to do almost the hardest thing possible for me, namely to give up the class which for thirty-four years had been mine, made so through love and service. That this sorrow must come had been borne in upon me for several years. The Northampton winters are rather severe, and, during the last five years, they had been too trying for my strength. There was a mile, too, to walk between my residence and the class-room, and I began to realize, as I never had before, that my way home was all up-hill. I used often to be obliged to use a cab, but I did not like that, and I concluded with great regret that as the winter was the best time for work among the girls, I must resign my post. I was extremely reluctant to do this, and therefore remained for several years longer, the nominal head of the class, enabled to do so by the valuable help of my friend Miss Ashton, who became my assistant and did much of the work

with beautiful devotion to the interests of the girls, who soon learned to love her, and with kind loyalty to the old teacher. But she married, and then I knew there remained to me nothing but entire withdrawal.

During the last lesson I gave to my girls the grace which had upheld me for all the years did not fail me. I knew it was the last, but they did not, and I had not the strength and courage to tell them, being afraid that the trouble would be nearly as great to them as to me, and quite too much to bear. Therefore at the close, I stood at the top of the stairs, and, as usual, shook hands with them each, as they passed from the room.

The next day I hurried away to my little haven at Barmouth, and, from there, I wrote my farewell to the girls, and sent my resignation of the class to the Church.

Among my treasures is the resolution passed by the College Street Church at its annual meeting. Perhaps I may be forgiven for inserting it here.

"8th February, 1901.

"DEAR MISS HEARN,

"At the Annual Meeting of the Church and Congregation, which was held last night and was well attended, I read your letter, and I need scarcely say that our friends received with very deep regret the announcement of your retirement from the Class. The following Resolution was passed unamimously :—

"'That, having heard Miss Hearn's letter read, we desire to record our heartfelt appreciation of the services she has rendered to the Church, and our deep regret that she has found it necessary to give up the Class with which she has been connected for nearly 34 years.

MY COTTAGE CRAIG-YR-HELBYL WITH VIEW.

"'For the helpful and gracious influence brought to bear on many lives during this long period; for the courtesy and kindness which have always marked her life amongst us; for her helpfulness in many ways, and rare qualities of mind and heart—all consecrated to the service of our Lord—we feel that we cannot be sufficiently grateful; and now on her retirement from active service in connection with the Class it is our earnest prayer that the richest blessings which our Father can bestow may be hers, and that her life may be long spared and strength given her to continue the literary work for which she is so widely known and esteemed.'

"Words sometimes seem very inadequate to convey our full meaning, but I trust you will accept this as expressing in some degree our high appreciation of your earnest faithful work for so many years, and our sincere wish that all comfort and peace, and every Divine blessing, may be yours in the years to come.

"With every assurance of our love and gratitude as a Church, and hoping soon to have you with us again,

"I am, dear Miss Hearn,

"Ever yours faithfully,

"RICHD. TIMMS,

"*Church Secretary.*"

Letters came also from many of my girls so warm with love and gratitude that I could do nothing but thank God, and weep over them. Although my hold had been loosening for some time, the wrench was terrible. And yet, as the months passed, the bitterness of the parting passed with them, and left me with very blessed memories. Unspeakable honour had been put upon me, of which I was never worthy, and a responsibility which I could not have borne but for the constant

inspiration and presence of Him who, I must believe, called me to this most delightful work. He dealt with me munificently all the time. I was encircled with love, and borne as on wings by the prayers of my girls. In my works, journeyings and undertakings, and especially in times of danger or difficulty, I have felt as if they were guarding me by their prayers. And in teaching others, as is the case with all teachers, I was myself taught, and knew more than I ever could have learnt otherwise of the verities of Christianity, and the sustaining power of the ever-living Saviour.

At the annual May meeting of the Sunday School Union of the same year, 1901, an event occurred which proved to me that although I had been obliged to give up my class I was still in touch with Sunday school teachers. The secretary, on behalf of the Council, informed me that the Union had resolved to present testimonials to teachers who had made a record of prolonged service in the Sunday school, and asked me if I would be the first to receive one in Exeter Hall that evening. I had one of the supreme moments of my life on this occasion. Mr. George Cadbury was president of the Union that year, and Mrs. Cadbury presented the testimonials. Of course Exeter Hall was packed, it always was at Sunday school meetings, and when my name was called and I stood up to receive the testimonial the whole assembly arose and gave me great congratulations. Naturally I was much touched by this warm appreciation of my fellow-workers in the Sunday school cause, and of the readers of *The Sunday School Times;* but think I felt most deeply the sight of the long row

of press-men, and women, just under the platform, whose greeting of an old comrade was unexpectedly warm and kind.

During the last ten years I have been saying *No* to invitations to speak at public meetings, and it has been in many cases a very difficult little word to write or utter, because my sympathies with the great movements of the day, and especially those that touch the young, are as keen as ever. Moreover, there is no sight quite so beautiful as that of hundreds of bright young faces looking with welcome and eagerness into the face of a speaker for whom they have an affectionate regard. However, it has had to be foregone by many, and at last by me.

But before I quite sank into silence another opportunity was given to me, which, because my health had been bettered by Barmouth and some rest, I could not resist. The Free Churches, knowing the good results which had accrued from the "Girls' Friendly Society," awoke to the fact that there were hosts of girls in their Churches and Sunday Schools who needed to be similarly looked after and cared for with affection. Having had a large experience with girls, and, I think, a good understanding of them, it seemed to me that I ought at this juncture to make an effort on behalf of the "Girls' Guild of Free Churches," and therefore helped in the establishment of a number of guilds. It made me feel almost young again to be once more talking to and about girls. The idea of the Free Church Council is to get the young people of different denominations to meet together for sisterly and helpful intercourse, to induce girls who

are not obliged to earn their own living to associate with and care for working girls who often need friends to look after their best interests. Also it is most desirable considering the habits of the present day, that when girls move from one town to another there should be some means of introducing them to Christian friends who would act as neighbours to them. But, indeed, the Guild helps girls in every way, very effectually, and commends itself to many friends. Mr. George Cadbury, Mrs. Percy Bunting, Dr. Munro Gibson, and the Rev. Thomas Law, took up the matter very earnestly, and Mrs. Benham became the efficient and devoted secretary. I am very glad to have been able to serve in any measure so excellent and needed an institution. But though I am still a member of the committee, my working time for the guilds themselves was a very short one. A cold winter convinced me that my platform work was practically finished. Since then, with a few short remarks at Sunday School Union meetings and gatherings near home, I have been a happily contented silent woman.

CHAPTER XVIII

AFTERMATH

THE jubilee of *The Christian World* has come and passed, and with it the completion of fifty years of my own work upon the journal. It was a very quiet anniversary. Some of us who were most interested in it said far less than we thought. A jubilee makes one nervous; we are apt to look back through the long, long way we have come with misgivings as to the spirit which has ruled us, and the conduct we have shown. A jubilee makes one sad, too. For a little while we seem to stand in a desert place alone, for so many fell at our side as we paced the distances. But a jubilee also makes one very glad and thankful. My first thought on the morning of the day was one of wonder. How strange it was that I had been preserved to remain at my post so long! And to think that I had been writing miscellaneous things for fifty years! Where had they all come from?

The memory of it made me feel rather tired: but I suppose one has the right to be tired after fifty years of constant work.

I found some old words and read them—

"A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather

the grapes in it of thy vine undressed. For it is the jubilee; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field. In the year of this jubilee ye shall return every man unto his possession."

The idea of the jubilee, then, was rest and return. I was very willing and glad to have it so.

After all, how poor my best had been! How much there was to make me ashamed, how little to make me satisfied. My song was scarcely so much a doxology as a cry for mercy. Friends told me that I was "the heroine of the occasion." I did not feel like one; but rather like a tired old woman who had lived her life, and for whom there could be but little left.

But I thank God for the buoyancy of spirit which has all my life been a blessing to me, and which reasserted itself on my jubilee. If sorrow had endured for a night joy came in the morning.. "You ought never to be depressed," a friend had said a few days before, and his words came to me like a rebuke on the jubilee morning. And how rich I was made with flowers and poems, telegrams, letters, and gifts! Congratulations and kind wishes were showered upon me, and my little room was a bower of sweet blossoms that were all messages of affection. The evening was spent with my own dear people of College Street church, a happy ending to the Jubilee day.

For many years, few weeks have passed without bringing me letters of appreciation and thanks from strangers. Not half the kind words which these letters contained have I deserved, but they have been very sweet to me all the same, and I have thanked God for

them. My trouble was that I could not reply to them, as I would gladly have done.

So often it has seemed that God gave me a message of comfort to pass on to others. "If your verses had been written specially for me they could not have been more suitable to my state and circumstances at the time," are words that frequently reach me. Not unfrequently subjects are suggested by others. "Ask Miss Farningham to write on the Comfort of Turned Pillows," said a dying friend to her nurse. I acted on the mournfully significant hint, and have been thanked by many other sufferers.

My jubilee was taken as a suitable opportunity for sending me kind words: the letters which came that week fill a big box. I am tempted to quote from a few of them. I do not think the writers will object if I do not add their names.

"I more particularly want to thank you for your book 'Girlhood,' and to tell you of the benefit I received from its teaching. My aunts gave it me when I was sixteen, and it was my monitor in many ways. I had a dear good mother and saintly grandmother to guide and teach me, but your book strengthened my principles and helped me to view life and its responsibilities in a different light; in fact I cannot express all it did for me."

"I have been reading *The Christian World* to-day, and, having grown grey and bald, may be excused for having indulged in reminiscences of my reading of the first number which fell into my hands. All I remember is that it contained some of your verses. I read them about twice, saw the paper no more, and just now I turned aside to set down how much

of them I could recall. I have never seen or heard them since, please remember."

The writer of this letter sent me a copy of my own lines, which I had quite forgotten—complete and perfect except for a few words. He must indeed possess a marvellous memory.

"You cannot guess what it has meant to me as a railway man to come home completely worn out and exhausted, to hear my wife read me some article of yours in *The Sunday School Times* or *The Christian World* describing graphically some scene or place which we know, oh so well! At such times the tired mind and body seem transported to the actual places and to be really looking upon them, at any rate with the eye of the mind. Such helps cannot be reckoned by any of our usual modes of estimating men and things, and so I must ask you to accept my poor acknowledgments and take them in the spirit in which they are offered." . . . "I would like to send you a root of Delphinium which, being a hardy perennial, would I believe succeed well in your garden."

"The writer wishes to tender sincere congratulations to Miss Farningham and to thank her for the comfort, good cheer and inspiration which her bright songs and cheery words have always been to him in his lonely and depressing work as a Missionary (P. E.) in the Rockies. He thanks her very much, and wishes her very many happy years of usefulness ere she goes to her real reward."

I have not had much time during my busy years to look back, my views have generally been forward ones; now I have leisure to count my mercies. I am thankful for the stock from which I came, and am as proud of my ancestors as if they had been dukes.

They were poor, but never sordid or mean. They were naturally gentlemen and gentlewomen, generous and large-hearted, given to hospitality, of innate refinement, and quite average intellectual ability. With no money to help them, they compelled respect by their high qualities of heart and mind. My Puritan grandmother represented the noblest characteristics of the English nation; and I feel it a great privilege that so grand a heritage was bequeathed to me, with a record of poverty, but of nothing ignoble.

It is easy to account for the fact that my writings have appealed most of all to the working classes, and it is their appreciation which has touched me the most deeply. Not very long ago a man stopped me in the street of a town which I was visiting, he having recognized me after hearing me give a Sunday school address several years previously, and he said, "I want to tell you that you have made drudgery easier and nobler for many of us working men." I felt as if a crown which I had never won had been placed upon my head, and could only say when I was able to speak at all, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name be the glory, for Thy mercy and for Thy truth's sake."

So I am enjoying my aftermath, and can sympathize with all ministers, writers, and teachers, who also receive the same joy of recognition. For myself I do not think I can better express my feelings than in the lines which I wrote for the Jubilee number of *The Christian World.*

"FIFTY YEARS.

"WHERE are they—those far years, that came
As if they meant to last for ever,
When each was welcomed with acclaim,
And every day with glad endeavour?
Alas! that none had power to hold
Those years of gold!

"They were like April's changeful day,
They flashed, and darkened, and departed,
But blessed me ere they passed away,
And left the worker stronger-hearted.
They lighted hopes, and banished fears,
Those fifty years.

"I glance behind me, and can see
How they flowed onward as life's river,
Their springs and summers came to me
As love-gifts from an unseen Giver;
Nor need I look through mists of tears
Over those years.

"With primrose stars, and violet scent
They made each spring a little dearer,
Love brightened every year I spent,
While home and rest were drawing nearer;
Yet was my work the gladdest thing
The years could bring.

"What shall I render to my God
For fifty years of loving-kindness?
He chose for me the path I trod,
And He forgave my doubt and blindness;
His peace will cheer the coming nights
With clear soft lights.

"I beckon you, the young, the strong,
'Tis good to hear your cheery laughter;
Come onward still, with joy and song,
Nor dread whate'er shall follow after.
Face life with trust, and not with fears,
God rules the years."

CHAPTER XIX

EVENTIDE

WE have all noticed how surely until life reaches its zenith the years bring us many kinds of enrichment, and how certainly after that time the years take our treasures, one by one, back again, kindly, gradually, it may be, but irrecoverably. First comes youth with its joys and loves, increasing every year. Then the glad awakening to all the promises and prophecies of life, and the ambition to realize them. Next, work to fill the days with activities and the nights with sleep. Afterwards, the developments of mind and imagination, the intellectual growth of all our powers, to which every year adds something good; the increasing love of home and friends who grow more numerous and more appreciative; a keen delight in music and oratory, in literature and books; while all the time we have stronger hopes, deeper gladness, the joy of success, the sweetness of praise, the happy consciousness that we have a place and position in the world, and to some extent the ability to fill it. These are the years when we sing from full hearts our psalms of thanksgiving to God, and rejoice in His goodness. These are the years, too, of wonder and

of humiliation, because we make so poor a return to Him. Probably to most of us these years of our fullest life are those of the keenest sense of our personal insignificance and insufficiency; and it is well that they should be so.

Soon after the heights are reached we realize, as never before, how swiftly we are travelling, although at first we are loth to believe that our road now lies downhill. Yet it is true. Possibly we are no longer being enriched by new gifts, but impoverished by the mysterious hand which reclaims the gifts once confided to our care. Something occurs to startle us with the conviction that we have lost our youth, and something too of its hopes and joys. The promises and prophecies of our life have not all been realized, and we have become less romantic in our ideals. Love is still beautiful, but now it wears a tender rather than a rosy glow. We find that there are better things in life than ambitions, and we care less for our successes since so many of those who rejoiced in them have passed away.

Yet let none think that it is sad to grow old. It is not the spring time now; we do not go forth to dig, to prune, and sow; but these are the days when our great Task-Master is giving a gracious ingathering; and though our harvest is poorer than we hoped, yet it is very good to have our golden sheaves, however small and few they be, that we may lay them at His feet. For it has all been His doing. His was the ground which we tried to dig, His the seed which He gave us for the sowing, His the plants which He taught us to prune, His the rain which watered and washed our little

plot, His the sun which encouraged growth, His the cold wind which made the plants strong ; and if we have any share in the harvest we can only say, " Behold, of Thine own have we given Thee."

We are not to be afraid of the havoc of the years. Not only are there compensations, such as more tender and protecting love, more time for rest, more leisure for contemplation, more serenity, and silence. The friends who are left become more generous to us, as if they would fain make up for the loss of those whose faces we see no more. Best of all, God seems more real to us, and more closely to companion us than amid the noise and activities of younger, stronger times. In this last chapter of my autobiography I am not afraid to say with Browning :

> " Grow old along with me,
> The best is yet to be."

However late in life it may be, and though the conditions are changed, we may still remain happy if we are permitted to continue our work. A pad, and a pen, and a shady nook used to be all I required for a good and happy day, but they are not all I want now. A firm table, a fountain-pen, a good fire and an easy-chair are more to be desired than couches of moss in the shadiest nook. Comfort is more than pleasure when we are old. We are not able to work continuously when brain and hand are tired ; and yet, after fifty years of work, I love it almost as much as ever, and do the little that I can do with great gladness of heart.

I am sometimes asked the question, " Is journalism

worth while? Does it pay?" That depends on the journalist. If he or she wishes chiefly to make money and become rich by it, I answer emphatically, "No." There is much fallacy in those interesting stories, which tell how in a time of trouble or debt, when the husband is in despair, the wife suddenly hears the postsman's knock, and receives a letter containing a cheque for a poem or article or tale, which pays up everything, so that the unsuspected writer and the relieved husband may live happily ever after. I do not say that such things never occur, but it would not be safe to place much hope on a cheque large enough to discharge a big debt, if it were drawn by an average editor or proprietor of magazine or journal. If the worried one could make "a dream of a hat," or compose an advertisement calculated to arrest the eye or secure attention, it would be a much more probable source of income. "I am certain that I can earn four hundred a year by my pen," said a friend, and a very clever writer; but alas, her hopes were never realized.

All the same my advice to young enthusiasts who love their fellow-creatures, and want to say things to them, is—Do not be discouraged, but write that which is in your hearts. Whatever the amount of the cheques you receive you will be well paid by the joy of expression, by your own deepened interest in the subjects on which you write, and by the unsolicited friendships which are secured to you by your labour. Journalism is in itself so delightful an occupation, that, without reference to money, I think, if your work be accepted, you will say with me—

"I would not change my blest estate,
For all that earth calls good or great."

Of course we all know that a few persons of distinguished genius have become very wealthy through their books; and that to-day an enormous number are making a comfortable and sufficient livelihood. And even if they add nothing to the death duties, which are so welcome to a Chancellor of the Exchequer, they will have been paid excellent wages for their work. Money is not everything to everybody; it cannot, must not, ought not, to be the greatest thing to a writer. As a rule, it is as likely as not that a pen-woman does not regard the question of cash quite as seriously as is desirable. A gentleman who once offered me his hand and heart made this suggestion as a reason why I should accept him: "You really need a man to make good terms for you, and to take care of the money when you have earned it." I could enjoy most of the good things which the rich enjoy, but I would rather have lived the simple life in some small cottage during all my years than have forfeited for them the beautiful things in which I have been paid and over-paid all my life. Always I have known that it was not in me to do any great thing which would impress the world, and cause me to be kept in remembrance, but have hoped that I should be able to do a great many little things which might tell on individuals. My desire has been to "*serve my generation, and fall asleep.*" To meet the needs of the future there will always be sufficient journals, and writers for them.

Perhaps I may here give a list of my books that

have been published and the dates as far I know them—

Lays and Lyrics of the Blessed Life	1860
Life Sketches and Echoes from the Valley (three series)	1861
Morning and Evening Hymns for a Week	1863
Gilbert, and other Poems	1866
Listening for the Bells	1867
Chats by the Sea	1868
Girlhood	1869
Home Life	1869
Little Tales for Little Readers	1869
Under the Shadow	1870
Boyhood	1870
The Cathedral's Shadow	1871
Sunday Schools of the Future	1871
Out of the Depths	1872
Brothers and Sisters	1873
Leaves from Elim (verse)	1873
Dell's New Year	1874
Sunday Afternoons with Jesus	1874
The Summer and Autumn of Life	1876
What of the Night? (a Temperance Tale)	1876
Will you Take It?	1877
The Clarence Family	1878
Songs of Sunshine (verse)	1878
The Children's Holidays	1879
The Story of the Years (a Text Book selected by my Father)	1880
Homely Talks about Homely Things	1886
Souvenir of the Queen's Jubilee (verse)	1887
Nineteen Hundred?	1892
A Story of Fifty Years	1893

In Evening Lights	1897
A Window in Paris	1898
Harvest Gleanings (verse)	1903
Women and their Saviour	1904
Women and their Work	1906

Almost all these first appeared as serials in one or other of the publications of Messrs. James Clarke & Co. before they were issued by them in book form. I think it necessary to refer to this, because people have imagined that they must have brought me in much money; but, as they had been already paid for, the financial results were small.

For most of the fifty years I have written entirely for Messrs. James Clarke & Co. Many of my friends regret this, especially the older ones, who think it a pity that I have not occasionally contributed to other journals and magazines, and by this means been brought into touch with other readers of perhaps another class. I have been frequently invited to do so, but always the request has been for "Marianne Farningham's" name to appear, and conscientious motives of common honesty have prevented this.

Besides, I have never lost faith in the kindness and fairness of those whom I may call my life-long employers. They have done everything I asked them, and done it with the utmost cordiality. There has been absolute harmony between us always. For the whole of fifty years we have not had an unpleasant word. Then, too, who could help being satisfied with a constituency as large as mine? Once I was talking to Mr. James Greville Clarke of the enormous numbers

of copies of a certain novel. "To be read by so many is enough to make one envious." "Not you!" he said, and he told me the circulation of *The Christian World* that year.

I am sorry that I have never been of the least use in politics. Of course I am a Liberal, but I cannot feel great enthusiasm for a Political Party. I can always see something good on the other side, and I think the two parties should more often agree to work together for the common good. I said this to a friend, who has votes, and he replied, shaking his head, "You are not worth taking any trouble about whatever." And perhaps he was right.

And now it is time that I brought this story of my life to a close. It goes without saying that I have not told everything. I have had sorrows, some even verging upon tragedies, especially in my early days, which I could not now describe, and which would do no good if I could. But I have also experienced remarkable interventions of Providence which have changed dangers into blessings. Trials and difficulties have sometimes been my lot, but far oftener have peace and plenteous good been sent to me. My life has been a singularly happy one. God has given me, to make it so in large measure, health, work, and friends. I believe that I am alive to-day because those who love me, especially my own dear people, have taken such loving care of me. I have been spared and considered in every possible way, and no burden which others could lift has pressed upon me too heavily. I can never say how thankful I am to-day that my religion has been one of joy and

trust. It has not been easy to me to doubt, and I have had no hesitation as to prayer. As a child I was taught that "Prayer is asking God for what we want," so I have prayed about everything, and though I have to thank Him for many ungranted petitions which were asked in great ignorance, yet to me there has been much comfort in sending even a little thought about a little thing to my Father.

I have been asked more than once a testing question by some wistful young beginner. "Miss Hearn, *is it really real*, all this that you and our minister tell us about the love of God, and the power of the Saviour?" To this I answer, *Yes, absolutely*. The power of Christ, and all that is claimed for it is the realest thing in life, the realest thing in the world. Supposing you give yourself to Christ when you are young. There are many things in you which conscience tells you are wrong, and which yet seem part of your nature, and extremely difficult to grow out of. By-and-by, however, you will realize that these are sins, and will learn to hate them, and to say with St. Paul, "The life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me," and you will care less and less for that which is wrong. When I was young, some one gave me a card to hang up in my bedroom headed, "What Jesus is able to do." Will you not take your New Testament, and make such a card for yourself? You will not be long in discovering that Christ who is able to save you is also able to keep you. His help is real, whatever your need may be; and prayer, which is communion with the Highest, does

bring the guidance we seek. Always we must watch as well as pray, but always our Saviour, Protector, and Guide, is nearer than our nearest friend, and even more accessible.

So you see there is nothing to be afraid of. Go on living your life and doing your work as a little child under direction. You are called to a very high type of Christianity. "I say unto you that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." This is the Master's standard: let it be ours. Remember that Christ's child is not to be mean and little, a backbiter, a lover of scandal, and untrustworthy. It is to us He gives the Golden Rule, and He can give the power to obey it.

It has been given me to prove that the consolations of the Christian life are also absolutely sure. Let us not suppose that when trouble and sickness overtake us God has sent them for punishment. I think that He is sorry for us. He will take us into His arms and comfort us, and will presently show us that the discipline of sorrow is the growth of the soul.

I find I am concluding with a homily, which I fear is quite characteristic; but then in one's autobiography one is allowed to tell one's own experiences.

In the old days when the weekly meetings of my Bible-class were held in my sister's house or my own, it was our custom, as the daylight slowly faded, to finish them in the twilight, or sometimes the firelight. If I wanted the girls to talk about the difficulties or the joys of young Christians, or of events in their own

lives, they would be less timid without than with the light. And so some of our happiest and most sacred times have been when the room was full of faces of girls in shadow, and the Spirit of Peace seemed to brood over us. When the time came for the last hymn to be sung, and it was too dark to see, we had a favourite which we sang so often that we knew every word by heart. It was Anna Warings' "Hymn after a Day of Difficulty." I feel it to be a good evening hymn for me to sing in the twilight of my life.

"Lord, a happy child of Thine,
Patient through the love of Thee,
In the life, the light divine,
Lives, and walks, at liberty.

"Leaning on Thy tender care,
Thou hast led my steps aright;
Fervent was my morning prayer,
Joyful is my song to-night.

"O my Shepherd, Guardian true,
All my life is Thine to keep,
At Thy feet my work I do,
In Thine arms I fall asleep."

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